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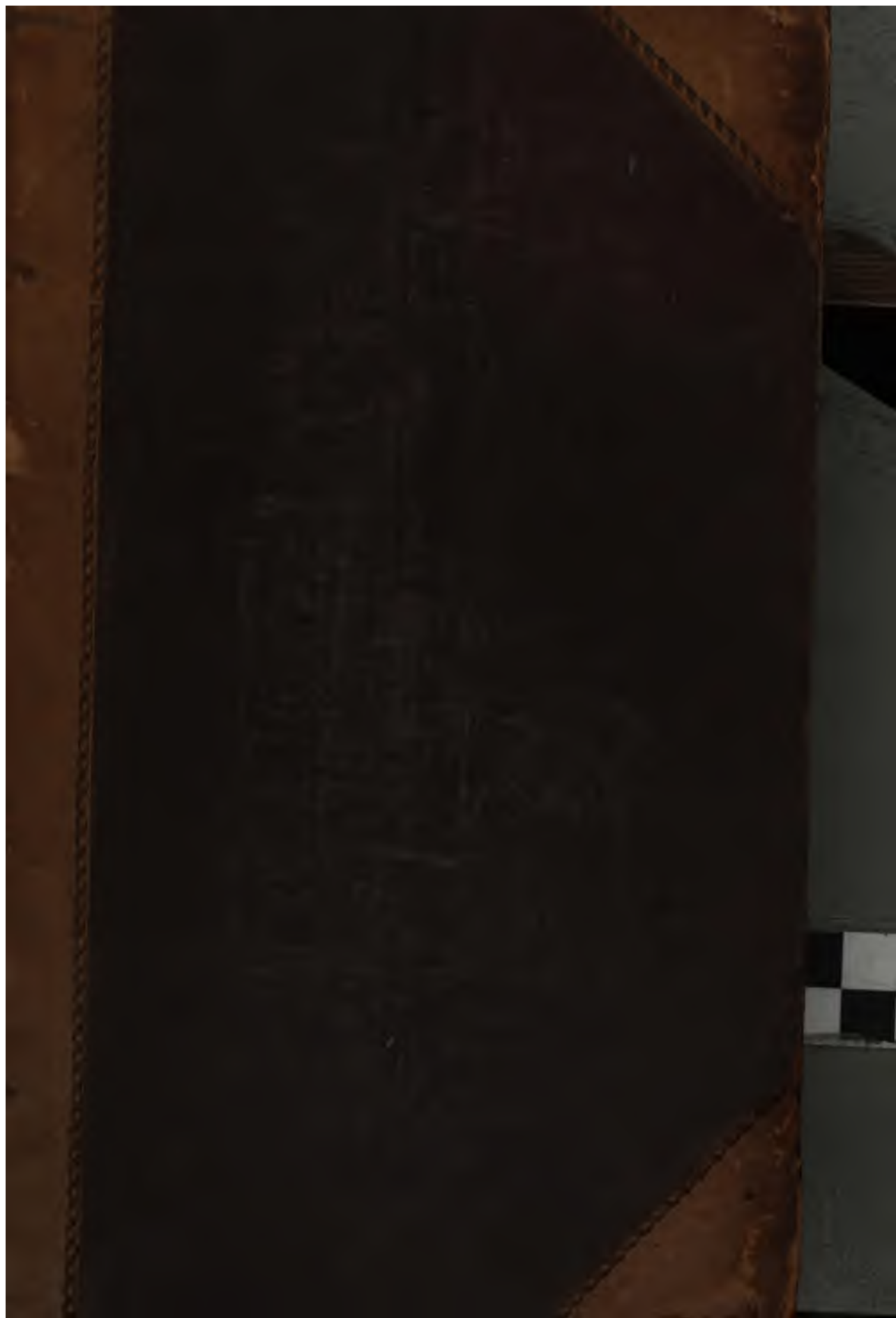
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A  
HISTORY  
OF  
BRITISH BIRDS.

BY  
THE REV. F. O. MORRIS, B.A.,

MEMBER OF THE ASHMOLLEAN SOCIETY.

VOL. II.  
CONTAINING SIXTY COLOURED ENGRAVINGS.

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*'Gloria in excelsis Deo.'*

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WRYNECK.

HISTORY  
OF  
BRITISH BIRDS.

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WRYNECK.

CUCKOO'S MATE. CUCKOO'S MAID. CUCKOO'S  
MESSENGER. RINDING-BIRD. SNAKE-BIRD. TONGUE-BIRD.  
EMMET-HUNTER.

GWAS Y GOG, OF THE ANCIENT BRITISH.

*Yunx torquilla*,

LINNÆUS. LATHAM.

*Yunx*—The Greek name of some bird, applied to the  
Wryneck. *Torquilla*—A factitious word, from  
*Torqueo*—To turn, twist, or wrest.

THIS singularly elegant, though plain-coloured bird,  
a seeming link between the Woodpeckers and Cuckoos,  
is found in the three divisions of the so-called old world.  
In Europe, it frequents Lapland, Norway, Sweden,  
Denmark, Germany, Spain, Greece, Italy, and, though  
but seldom, Holland. It is said also to be met with in  
Kamtschatka. In Asia, it is found among the Himalaya  
mountains; and also, according to Temminck, in Japan.





In this country it is found in all the more southern counties, but mostly on the eastern side of the island, and, but rarely, as far north as Northumberland. A few have been met with in Scotland, namely, two in Berwickshire, one in Fifeshire, and one or two in other parts. In Ireland it has not yet been noticed. In Yorkshire I have once seen it, between Armthorpe and Doncaster, and it has been observed there occasionally by others, as well as near Sheffield, Barnsley, Halifax, Hebden-Bridge, and York. I have also seen it not very unfrequently in Worcestershire.

This bird is a regular periodical visitant to us, and usually arrives, though in uncertain, and, I fear, from whatever cause, in gradually diminishing numbers, the first or second week in April, a few days before the Cuckoo, whence one of its provincial names. It takes its departure the end of August, or beginning of September. On the Continent it is an inhabitant of the colder parts, during the summer months.

The Wryneck is not a shy bird, and, if disturbed, flies only to a short distance. It has a curious habit, whence its name, of turning its head and neck about in an odd manner, first extending the former forwards, then moving it slowly awry from side to side, and even twisting it quite round, when the black line on the back of the neck adds to its peculiar appearance, accompanying this singular proceeding with a fanning of the tail, and a bowing and scraping of the whole body, uttering the while a croaking sound. These postures, however, are only performed by the old birds, who also, at times, express their feelings by a puffing out and distention, in apparent excitement, of the feathers of the head and throat, and this they also do if approached in the nest, making at the same time a hissing

noise, the origin, probably, of their provincial name of Snake-bird, unless indeed it be derived from the writhing motion of the head and neck. The young are easily tamed.

More than a pair of Wrynecks are not, except by accident, seen together. They are unsocial birds, solitary except during the breeding season. Orchards, gardens, coppices, plantations, and, occasionally, trees in the open fields, are their resorts. For the most part they may be seen on an ant-hill, a bank, or the lower branches of a middle-sized tree, giving a preference to a leafless or a dead one, a low bush, or a hedge-row.

The Wryneck does not, in general, fly far at a time, but only from one bush or tree to another, and its flight is rather awkward than otherwise. It roosts in some hole of a tree. On the ground it moves by hopping, and, though it supports itself against the trunk of a tree, like the Woodpeckers, yet does not move forwards in that position.

Its food consists principally of ants, and their eggs and larvæ. These it obtains by means of its long projectile tongue, to the glutinous substance on which they adhere, having first, if necessary, shaken with its bill their house about their ears, and so dislodged and collected them together; otherwise, if the earth be hollow, the hard-tipped tongue, which is two inches and a quarter in length, is thrust into the interstices, and the tenants extracted: not a little earth is also swallowed with them. It also feeds on other insects, and, Bechstein says, will eat elder-berries. Montagu kept one for a short time, and he observed that the tongue is darted forward and retracted with unerring aim, and at the same time with such velocity, "that an ant's egg, which is of a light colour, and more conspicuous than

the tongue, has somewhat the appearance of moving towards the mouth by attraction, as a needle flies to a magnet." The young are fed with caterpillars, ants, and their eggs.

The note is peculiar, and somewhat resembles that of the Kestrel, Hobby, and other smaller species of Hawk. It is rendered by the words 'good, good, good,' 'cue, cue, cue, cue,' or 'qui, qui,' and an abrupt 'shick,' the former before the young brood are hatched, and the latter afterwards, but only 'sotto voce.'

The nest is placed in a hole of a tree, the mouldered wood of which, seems to supply its chief, or only lining, or rather, layer. The apple tree is frequently chosen. It is made of small roots, and the old nest of a Woodpecker or some other bird would appear to be sometimes adapted, and in some slight degree fashioned with its bill, to its own use by the Wryneck. Its domiciles at various heights from the ground, and various depths from the surface of the tree, often close to a road side, in view of every passer by.

The eggs, from six or seven, to nine or ten in number, are pure white. Mr. Salmon relates, that having removed the nest of a pair of these birds, in quest of their eggs, and having replaced it, on finding that it did not contain any, they still resorted to it, and he obtained successively from it, though the nest was necessarily again taken out, the several numbers of five, six, four, and seven eggs. The poor bird, thus, according to this inveterate and unrelenting bird-nester, "suffered her nest to be disturbed five times, and the eggs, (amounting altogether to twenty-two,) to be taken away at four different periods within the month before she finally abandoned the spot she had selected." The young are hatched in about fourteen days, and the female

bird is so much attached to them, that she may easily be taken, not only while sitting on the eggs, but even after the young are hatched and fledged. The same spot is resorted to year after year.

Male; weight, about ten drachms; length, about seven inches, or seven and a half; bill, yellowish brown; iris, chesnut brown; head, hoary grey, with a tinge of yellow or white, most elegantly mottled, speckled, striated, and barred with brown, the bars of an arrow-shape, and most on the crown; neck, in front, pale yellow brown, with narrow transverse black lines; nape, the same—a streak of black mixed with brown runs down from it to the lower part of the back; chin and throat, yellowish white and brown, with transverse black bars; breast, white, with numerous arrow-shaped black spots, on its sides it has a patch of brown; back, as the head.

The wings have the first and third feathers nearly equal in length, longer than the fourth, and a little shorter than the second, which is the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, as the head; primaries, barred alternately with pale yellow, brown, and black; secondaries, brown, speckled with yellow brown, and a few white spots; tertiaries, the same, with a line of black. Tail long, and much rounded at the end; the colour is grey, mottled with brown, and with four irregular black bars, underneath it is pale greyish brown, barred and speckled with black; upper tail coverts, grey, speckled with brown; under tail coverts, dull white, tinged with pale yellow brown; legs, toes, two before and two behind, and claws, brown.

The female resembles the male, but the colours of her plumage are not so bright, and the band on the back not so long as in the male.

The young are also lighter in colour.



## CREEPER.

TREE CREEPER. COMMON CREEPER. FAMILIAR  
CREEPER. TREE CLIMBER.

*Certhia familiaris*,                      PENNANT. MONTAGU.

*Certhia*, ..... ? *Familiaris*—Familiar, common.

THIS modest and retiring little bird, is, so to speak, neither common nor uncommon. Even where it is to be seen, it often is not seen, for, not only is its dress of a sober and unpretending character, bearing resemblance, likewise, as is the case with many of nature's animate works, to the less-highly organized substances on which it plays its part, but, it also, more shy apparently, than fearful, shuns observation, and, on coming within the range of your glance, withdraws at once from sight. By watching for its return, you will often again catch a glimpse of it, but, frequently, hid by the tree, it flies off to some neighbouring one, on which you next see it. It is more frequently detected by its note than by its appearance.

It is found plentifully throughout Europe; as far north as Russia, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden; and southwards, in Germany and Italy. It is also found in North America, and occurs in all parts of our Islands.

Wooded districts, and the larger kinds of trees, providing it with food, are its resort.

The Creeper, though in other countries it moves from



CREEPER.



exposed to more sheltered localities, for the purpose of rearing its young, arriving thereat in March, and departing in September or October; remains with us throughout the year.

These little birds are mostly seen singly, or in pairs, and sometimes in company with the Titmice, almost always engaged in creeping up the trunks of trees, or flitting from one tree to another, and seldom on the ground. In winter, "when the hoar-frost is chill," they come to farm-yards and other out-buildings, in search of any food which such less-exposed situations may have caused to be left in their way. They are of most diligently active and industrious habits, being rarely indeed to be seen, from any cause, in an attitude of rest. Their progress is only upwards on the trees, aided by the rest afforded by their deflected tails, or underneath or on the horizontal branches, and performed with great celerity by a series of impulses, the outline of their general contour, contributed by their arched bill, back, and tail, assuming almost the form of a segment of a circle.

Their flight is undulated, and generally short—a journey from tree to tree, alighting at the base, and nimbly winning their way to the top, when the like course is again and again repeated.

The food of this species consists, for the most part, of small beetles and other insects, spiders and caterpillars, which, with its long and slender curved beak, it extracts from fissures in the bark of trees, as well as at times from those of old fences and other wooden buildings; and it also eats seeds.

The note of the Creeper resembles the word 'tree tree,' quickly and rather shrilly repeated. It attracts your attention, being so evidently produced by a very

tiny throat.

Nidification commences in March, and a second brood is very frequently reared the same year, but not, it seems to be thought, in the same nest.

The nest is composed of grass, straws, fibres of roots, and twigs, bits of bark, spiders' webs, and the cocoons of chrysalides, lined with the latter and feathers. It is placed either in a hole or some crevice of the bark of a tree, the willow, as most affording such as it requires, being preferred, or even between two stems, and has been found in the interstice afforded by two palings: a hole previously tenanted by a Titmouse or other small bird is sometimes resorted to. It is shaped more widely, or more narrowly, according to the width afforded by its plot of building ground. The Rev. Gilbert White, in his "Natural History of Selborne," says, "a pair of Creepers have built at one end of the parsonage house at Greatham, behind some loose plaster. It is very amusing to see them run creeping up the walls with the agility of a mouse. They take great delight in climbing up steep surfaces, and support themselves in their progress with their tails, which are long and stiff, and inclined downwards."

The eggs, eight or nine at the former brood, laid in April, and four or five at the second, are white, with a few red spots all over, or only at the thicker end. They are hatched in thirteen days, and both birds sit on them by turns. The young are fed with small caterpillars. "If the young," says Meyer, "are disturbed, they crawl out of the nest up the tree, but if they should fall to the ground, they run quickly amongst the grass and hide themselves, and are almost certain to make their escape."

Male; weight, about two drachms; length, from five

inches to five inches and a quarter; bill, long, slender, and curved downwards; it is compressed towards the tip, and ridged on the upper part, which is larger than the lower one; the latter is dull yellowish white, except at the tip, which, as is the whole of the upper one, is dusky: the space between it and the eye is brown ash-colour. Iris, brown; a white streak runs over it, and ends in a spot of the same at the side of the nape: from the eye backwards extends a dusky streak. Head on the sides, brown ash-colour, spotted with white; crown, dusky brown, with markings of dull white, and darker and lighter yellow; neck and nape, the same, the spots larger; chin and throat, white. Breast, silvery soiled white, yellowish on the sides and the lower part; back, as the neck.

Wings; the first feather is very short, the second nearly half-an-inch shorter than the third; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth nearly equal in length, the fourth rather the longest; greater wing coverts, dusky, white on the tips and the outer webs, the edges of the white yellowish; lesser wing coverts, dusky, tipped with white; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dusky tipped with white, more extended over the ends of the three last feathers; from the fourth to the fifteenth feather, a yellowish white band across the middle of each, which is straight when the wings are extended, but is in heraldic phrase 'wavy,' or, rather, 'crenellée,' when they are closed. Tail, reddish or brownish ash-colour, yellowish towards the outer edge, the shafts pale brown yellow; upper tail coverts, as the back, tinged with tawny rust-colour; under tail coverts, reddish yellow, tipped with white. Legs, toes, and claws, pale yellow brown, the last named with a tinge of pale red: they are very long and curved.

The female nearly resembles the male.

## BLACK WOODPECKER.

## GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER.

*Picus martius*,

PENNANT. MONTAGU.

*Picus*—A bird that makes holes in trees, supposed to be the Woodpecker. *Martius*—martial—warlike; also, belonging to the month of March.

THE Black Woodpecker is found in Europe, in the mountain forests of Switzerland, as also in Russia, Siberia, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Italy, and France. It has been met with in Persia; and also, by my friend Hugh Edwin Strickland, Esq., in Asia Minor. It is a native likewise of some parts of North and South America.

The following specimens of this bird have been met with in this country:—Two were shot in Yorkshire, and unfortunately not preserved; two were seen by Thomas Meynell, Jun., Esq., in the grounds of his father's seat, the Friarage, at Yarm; and one was shot the first week in March 1846, near Ripley, the seat of Sir William A. Ingilby, Bart.; one shot by Lord Stanley, in Lancashire; one on the trunk of a tree, in Battersea fields, near London, in the year 1805; one in the collection of Mr. Donovan; one in Lincolnshire; two in a wood near Scole, in Norfolk; a pair seen several times in a wood near Christchurch, in Hampshire; one shot in a nursery garden near Blandford, in Dorsetshire;



BLACK WOODPECKER  
C.





and another at Whitchurch, in the same county; both recorded by Dr. Pulteney. Others, according to Dr. Latham, in Devonshire and some of the southern counties; and one in Scotland, as recorded by Sir Robert Sibbald.

In addition to all these, J. Mc'Intosh, Esq., of Charminster, Dorsetshire, records in "The Naturalist," No. 1, page 20, that he has known these birds to occur more than once at Charborough Park, in that county, the seat of J. S. W. S. E. Drax, Esq.; and also to have built several times, one pair he believes, three successive years, at Claremont, Surrey.

In Ireland, the Black Woodpecker has not yet been seen.

The gloomy recesses of the sunless pine woods are the proper place of this sable species. In the "Black Forest" he is at home, and does not consider himself as an "Exile of the Landes."

These birds are of a morose and unsociable disposition. Two are the most that associate together; a third is, immediately on its appearance, banished from their neighbourhood. "The Black Woodpecker is a strong, active, and lively bird. Its restless nature drives it from spot to spot; and when aware of being observed too nearly, it endeavours to effect its escape, unnoticed by its pursuers, at an incredible rate, but may generally be detected by the noise it makes, first in one place, then in another, in less time than seems possible. When hurried, it runs up a tree, taking reiterated leaps forward, with such force that its claws may plainly be heard hooking into the rough bark of the tree, and its tail beating against it alternately to balance itself. Under these circumstances the bird holds its head back and raises its breast from the tree, which gives it, in that

attitude, a noble appearance."

Its flight is heavy, and not extended—a series of falls and risings, performed with some degree of apparent difficulty, the wings being exerted to a more than ordinarily forward extension. In general it is only continued from the top of one tree to the bottom of another up which the bird runs with nimble alertness, evidently perfectly at home. It is said to roost at night in the hole of a tree, perhaps, at times, that in which it builds, and to enlarge it for itself if necessary.

It preys on beetles and other insects and their larvæ; ants and their eggs; which are captured by means of the glutinous substance exuded from its elongate tongue, darted out whenever they are likely to be obtained. In default of this food, it is said, by Temminck, to eat nuts, seeds, and berries.

The note, at least that of the male bird, is rendered by the syllables 'cree, cree,' and 'kirr, kirr;' and it has other flexions of varied import, not without meaning, doubtless, to the birds themselves. While thus engaged, the crimson feathers of the head are erected, and have a beautiful appearance fanning in the sun. The beating and vibration of the dead branches, caused by the "sturdy stroke" of the potent bill of the Black Woodpecker, is said to be heard at the distance of half a mile.

These birds commence building in the beginning of April, and the nest is placed in the hole of a tree, most frequently the fir, at a height, generally, of about fifty or sixty feet from the ground, or occasionally, in a hollow of a wall. The entrance to it is narrow, being only of sufficient diameter to admit a man's hand; but beyond this, it widens in a downward direction, to the width of about nine inches. The chips and splinters made by the bird in excavating its nursery,

frequently betray the locality to the curious, some of them being of considerable size, even several inches long; so great is the power of the bill, acting almost like a bill-hook.

The eggs, from three, it is said, to five or six in number, are white, smooth, and shining. The male is reported to take his turn on the nest, and this labour of both lasts for seventeen or eighteen days. The young are fed with ants' eggs, and are so carefully guarded by their parents, that they will hardly quit the nest if it be approached.

Male; weight, twenty to twenty-three ounces; length, one foot four inches, to as much as one foot seven or eight, according to different accounts; bill, black at the tip, the base almost white, the remainder bluish horn-colour, ending in yellowish: the upper part is longer than the lower. Iris, pale yellow; a small tuft of bristly feathers extend forwards from the base of the bill; crown, deep rich red, the feathers black at the base. The whole of the rest of the plumage is black, the under part more dull than the upper.

The wings, which extend to half the length of the tail, have the first feather narrow, pointed, and only two inches in length; the second about five inches long, also narrow and pointed, and of equal length with the ninth; the third shorter than the fourth, fifth, or sixth, which are of about equal length, and the longest in the wing, the fifth the most so; the tips of the wings are rusty black. The two middle feathers of the tail are the longest, the outside ones the shortest, the former being seven inches, and the latter only two and a half long, all much narrowed at the tips, hollowed beneath, and the webs at the tips resembling bristles; legs slate-colour, partly feathered; two of the toes are turned

backwards, the inner one being only half as long as the outer one; claws, black, much curved, strong, and sharp.

The female has the crimson colour only at the back of the head.

The young males have the iris grey, and the crown of the head only spotted with red.





GREY WOODPECKER

## GREEN WOODPECKER.

ECLE. LARGE GREEN WOODPECKER. POPINJAY.  
 WOODSPITE. RAIN-BIRD. RAIN-FOWL.  
 WHITTLE. HIGH HOE. HEW-HOLE. PICK-A-TREE.  
 AWL-BIRD. YAPPINGALL. YAFFLE. YAFFER.  
 NICK-A-PECKER.

*Picus viridis*,  
*Brachylophus viridis*,

LINNÆUS.  
 SWAINSON.

*Picus*—A bird that makes holes in trees, supposed to be  
 the Woodpecker. *Viridis*—Green.

THOUGH to man it is a difficulty to make even a copy without some variation from the original, yet, to strike out a fresh design, is by no means so easy as it might therefore be thought. Let the thoughtful artist then, devoutly wonder at the unspeakable beauty of the varieties which the hand of Almighty power and wisdom has pourtrayed in the "fowls of the air," as in all the other "wonderful works" of nature, "which God created and made."

This handsome species is a native of Europe, being found in more or less plenty, according to the suitability of the locality, in Russia, Siberia, Spain, Greece, Italy, Scandinavia, France, and Holland; also in Africa; and in Egypt, according to Meyer.

It is common throughout England, and, according to Selby, in Scotland, that is to say, in all the wooded



sedulously devoted to them, and, when fully fledged, they all quit together in company.

Male; length, one foot one inch and a half; bill, black, or bluish black, the base of the lower part being nearly white; from its corner a black streak runs downwards, the middle part being brilliant red, the feathers grey at the base; iris, greyish white, with a faint tinge of yellow; it is surrounded by a black space, part in fact of the streak; black bristles surround the base of the bill. Forehead, jet black; head, on the sides, greenish white; crown, brilliant red, running downwards to a point brighter than the rest; neck, on the sides, greyish green, on the back and the nape, greenish yellow; chin, as the breast; throat, brownish white; breast, yellowish grey, with a tinge of green; back, above greenish yellow, below yellow.

The wings reach nearly to half the length of the tail; the first feather is very short, the fourth and fifth the longest in the wing; greater and lesser wing coverts, yellowish green; primaries, greyish black, spotted with faint yellowish white square spots along the outer web, and the inner half of the inner one, with round ones, the tips not spotted; secondaries and tertiaries, green on the outer web, and greyish black spotted with dull white on the inner one, most dull towards the primaries; greater and lesser under wing coverts, dusky and greyish white, in bars, with rows of spots, the whole tinged with greenish yellow, The tail, of twelve feathers, is barred with dull greyish white, or greenish white, and dull greyish black; it is long, stiff, and pointed, the two middle feathers being the longest, the others graduated; they are grooved underneath; beneath it is dusky, with bars of greyish white; upper tail coverts, yellow; under tail coverts, with

dusky greenish transverse markings; legs and toes, blackish grey, with a tinge of green, and strong, with large scales in front, and small ones behind; the toes are roughened beneath, as in all the rest of the genus; two toes are in front, and two behind; claws, black and much hooked.

Female; length about one foot; there is no red on the black moustache, and less on the crown than in the male. The whole plumage is also more dull in colour.

The young have the scarlet of the moustache, which is itself faint, as is the black round the eye, and that on the head, mixed with yellow, greyish white, and greyish black; the neck, chin, and throat are dull greyish white, with a tinge of dull yellowish green, streaked with greyish black; the breast the same, but barred transversely; on the back and wings, the green feathers are interspersed with grey, and tipped with yellow, and have a yellowish white mark along the shafts.

Temminck says that varieties of a yellowish white colour occasionally occur.

## GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

WHITWALL. WITWALL. WOODWALL. WOODNACKER.  
 WOODPIE. FRENCH PIE. PIED WOODPECKER.  
 GREATER SPOTTED WOODPECKER. GREAT BLACK AND  
 WHITE WOODPECKER. FRENCH WOODPECKER.

*Picus major*,                      PENNANT. MONTAGU.  
*Picus varius major*,          RAY.

*Picus*—A bird that makes holes in trees, supposed to be  
 the Woodpecker. *Major*—Greater.

THIS species is found over the whole of the European continent, from Russia to Italy, Sweden to France, Denmark and Norway to Germany, and other countries. In Asia Minor it has been noticed by H. E. Strickland, Esq.; and, Meyer says, is found in America also.

In this country, it is of local distribution, dependent entirely on the nature of the locality, and nowhere to be called common. Wooded districts are, of course, its resort; and it is most frequent in the midland counties, in parks, forests, and woods, and is occasionally to be seen in gardens. It becomes much less numerous farther north.

In Yorkshire it occurs not very unfrequently near Huddersfield, as Peter Inchbald, Esq. informs me; and it has been known to breed there. Near Sheffield, also, it is not rare; and has been met with near Hebden-Bridge, Barnsley, and Plumpton, all in the West-



GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER.



Riding; Castle Howard, in the North-Riding; and one at Boynton, in the East-Riding. In Northumberland it is scarce, and in Cumberland. W. F. Wratislaw Bird, Esq. has written me word, that one of these birds, which, probably, as he remarks, had strayed from Kensington Gardens, where they are not unfrequent, was observed, a few years since, early in the morning, climbing up the wall of a house near Cavendish Square, London. Was it making its way to the "Woods and Forests?"

In Scotland it sparingly occurs in Roxburghshire and Dumfriesshire, and even farther north; and in the neighbourhood of the Spey and the Dee. In the Orkney Islands, one was shot near Scapa; another by Mr. Strang, on the 10th. of September, 1830; a young one was caught at Stronsay; and another shot in the garden of Mr. Traill, of Woodwick, at Kirkwall. For these particulars I am indebted to the very complete "*Historia Naturalis Orcadensis*," published by W. B. Baikie, Esq., M. D., and Mr. Robert Heddle, and very obligingly forwarded to me by those gentlemen, for the use of this work.

In Ireland, eleven specimens have been placed on record by William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, as having occurred in various parts of the island.

Mr. Selby considers that these birds are probably migratory, as he has met with them in Northumberland in the months of October and November, generally after storms from the north-east. They, at all events, wander about more in the autumn than in any other part of the year.

This species naturally displays the capabilities of climbing, which distinguish its race. With the most easy adroitness, it runs in all upward directions over the branches and trunks of trees, seeming at the same

time to prefer having the latter between you and it, should you approach. Sometimes they will run up to the top of the tree, and then fly off. They seldom alight on the ground, and their movements then are neither quick nor graceful. The old birds shew great attachment to their young. Montagu mentions one instance in which "notwithstanding that a chisel and mallet were used to enlarge the hole, the female did not attempt to fly out till the hand was introduced, when she quitted the tree at another opening." The Greater Spotted Woodpecker is a courageous, active, strong, and lively bird; but unsociable with strangers, and defensive of its own food.

The flight of this Woodpecker is straight and strong, but short and curved; the wings being quickly moved from, and brought close back again to the body.

Their food consists of insects and caterpillars, seeds, fruits, and nuts. Mr. Gould observes that they "sometimes alight upon rails, old posts, and decayed pollards, where, among the moss and vegetable matter, they find a plentiful harvest of spiders, ants, and other insects; nor are they free from the charge of plundering the fruit trees of the garden, and, in fact, commit great havoc among cherries, plums, and wall fruit in general." They alarm the insects from their recesses by the noise made with their bills upon the trees, which is audible at the distance of half-a-mile. Meyer says that they do not eat ants; but he adds the eggs of insects, nuts, the seeds of fir-cones, and other seeds to the above bill of fare; and he also remarks, though I own I cannot think it a circumstance of very common occurrence, "the jealousy of this bird leads it into danger, as it is sure to take notice if any one taps against a tree; and approaches sometimes near enough to be caught with

the hand."

In the spring, these birds produce a like jarring noise to that made by the Green Woodpecker; and their note is expressed by Meyer by the syllables 'gich,' and 'kirr,' uttered only once at a time, at long intervals; perched, when wooing, at the top of a tree,

About the end of March, or beginning of April the nidification of these birds commences.

No nest is formed; the eggs are laid on the dust that lodges at the bottom of the hole, at a depth of six or seven inches, but sometimes as much as two feet from the orifice. A pine tree seems to be preferred, but the oak and others are also made available; a pre-existing hole being adapted to their wants, or if there be none such, a new one is scooped out of the most unsound part of the tree. There is frequently a second hole, which facilitates the escape of the bird in case of danger.

The eggs are four or five in number, white and glossy, and are hatched after an incubation of fifteen or sixteen days.

Male; weight, about two ounces and three-quarters; length, about nine inches and a half; bill, dark shining horn-colour; from its base proceeds a streak of black towards the nape, from the middle of which another passes down each side of the neck, meeting upon the upper part of the breast, where it forms a half-moon-shaped patch. Iris, purple red. The eye is surrounded by a dull white ring; a few bristly feathers project about the base of the bill; forehead, buff or rusty yellowish white, black behind it; head on the back, bright scarlet; crown, dark bluish black; on the back part of the side of the neck is a white patch; nape, black; chin, throat, and breast, dingy or buff white; back, black.



The wings expand to the width of one foot, and have the first feather very short; the second shorter than the seventh, but longer than the eighth; the third, fourth, and fifth, the same length as the seventh, the sixth the longest. The outer greater wing coverts, black, the inner white; lesser wing coverts, black; primaries, black, with from two to five white patches on the outer web of each feather, and rounder ones on the inner; secondaries, black; tertiaries, black. The tail has the two middle feathers black, pointed, and longer than the rest; the two next black, tipped with white; the next black and white, the white barred with black; the middle feathers are three inches and three-quarters in length, while the outer ones are only one inch and a quarter; upper tail coverts, black; under tail coverts, red; legs and toes, blackish grey, the former feathered part of the way down in front; claws, much hooked and black.

The female is without the red on the head. These birds moult as late as the beginning of November.

Young; at first the whole head is scarlet, till the first moult, when the females lose that colour entirely, and the males retain it only on the back of the head. The young of the year are a little less in size than the old birds, and all the colours are less bright. Forehead, white; head, on the back black, and in front, behind the forehead, scarlet; crown red, sometimes with a few black feathers interspersed.

I am much indebted to W. F. W. Bird, Esq., for a careful 'resumé' of the various authorities 'pro and con,' on the subject of a supposed occurrence of another species of Woodpecker, the Middle Spotted; from which, on the whole, it seems to be incontestably established that it is only the young of the one before us; though, as Hunt remarks in his "British Ornithology," "it is

certainly a curious circumstance that the beautiful scarlet on the head of the young, is next to the white forehead, whilst in the old bird, the scarlet is at the back of the head, and the black next to the white forehead;" and also, that in the case of a nest of three young birds and an old one, sent to him from the Rev. Mr. Whitear, one of the young ones weighed more than its parent; but 'maternal solicitude' may have been the cause both of the one and the other effect.

## LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

LEAST SPOTTED WOODPECKER. LITTLE  
 BLACK AND WHITE WOODPECKER. BARRED WOODPECKER.  
 LITTLE FRENCH WOODPECKER.  
 HICKWALL. PUMP-BORER. CRANK-BIRD.

<i>Picus minor</i> ,	LINNEUS. PENNANT.
<i>Picus varius minor</i> ,	BRISSON.
<i>Picus varius tertius</i> ,	RAY.

*Picus*—A bird that makes holes in trees, supposed to be  
 the Woodpecker. *Minor*—Less—lesser.

THIS species is found in Europe—in France, Italy, Scandinavia, Siberia, and Holland; in which latter it is rare.

In Yorkshire one of these birds was shot by Peter Inchbald, Esq., of Storthes Hall, near Huddersfield, in the winter of 1848; and this gentleman writes me word that a nest of the same species, containing five eggs, was found in that neighbourhood on the 31st. of May, 1851. In Worcestershire I have known it to occur, as has also W. F. W. Bird, Esq. In Norfolk it breeds, but is rare: one was shot at Blickling, in April, 1847. In Suffolk, one was shot at Haughleigh, near Stowmarket, in 1847. In Sussex a pair bred at Peasmarsh, in the beginning of June, 1849, in a plum tree, only a few yards from a house: a male was shot in 1844, at Arundel; another at Albourne, in December, in



LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER.



1848; and one was captured at Parham House, having flown in through an open window; a few near Chichester, and others on the eastern side of the county. In Derbyshire, one near Newton, in the parish of Melbourne, December 11th., 1844. It has also occurred in Lancashire, Shropshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey, not very unfrequently; Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Cornwall, Herefordshire, Warwickshire, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Middlesex, not very uncommonly near London—in Kensington Gardens; at Southgate, and in Greenwich Park. In Northumberland one was killed near Newcastle, in the month of January, 1829. In Orkney one was shot by Mr. Low, near Stromness, in the winter of 1774; and another was observed at Sanday, on the 14th. of October, 1823.

Like the rest of its race, nay, like the rest of another race, the great object of this bird is to get to the 'top of the tree.' Its motive, however—more than can be always said in the other case—is only a laudable one—to procure its necessary food: it sometimes perches on the topmost branch. It more peculiarly affects the apple, plum, beech, and elm; but not by any means exclusively.

The Little Woodpecker is of a morose disposition, and prefers its own company: excepting while the young birds continue to require their parents fostering care, more than two are not seen together, and even this number only in the breeding season. It is not at all a shy bird. Wooded districts are its natural and necessary resort.

Its flight is undulated like that of its congeners, the wings being drawn close to the body, and then quickly flapped while extended.

Its food consists of small insects and their larvæ, spiders and ants, which are generally procured from the branches of trees in the fields and orchards, and, abroad, in the vineyards; but occasionally on the ground. The mode of their capture is the same as in the case of the other species of the genus.

It makes the same sort of jarring noise that the other Woodpeckers do, but of course in a 'minor' key. Its note, which is rather shrill and often repeated, but not frequently uttered while on the wing, resembles the syllables 'keek, keek, keek, keek;' and one of the sounds it makes is likened by the country people to that made by an auger in boring; hence one of its vernacular names.

The nest, so to call it, is placed at the bottom of a hole in a tree, in some cases found ready made to its hand, and at others adapted by itself to its requirements. Sometimes more than one hole is either wholly or in part thus fashioned, though only one can be finally occupied.

The eggs, generally five in number, are white: they are hatched in fourteen days.

Male; weight, not quite five drachms; length, five inches and a half to six inches; bill, lead-coloured, black at the tip, rather weaker than in the other species, sharply ridged on the upper surface: from the corner of the bill a moustache proceeds, first black and white, then black, ending in a triangular black spot, the lower part of which shades off into dusky shaft streaks; iris, red; the feathers around it are brownish yellow: over it, and extending down the sides of the neck, is a white streak; greyish brown bristles surround the parts near the bill. Forehead, brownish yellow or greyish white; head and crown, bright red, palest

towards the front and darker towards the nape; the sides are margined with black, which, meeting behind, forms an irregular patch, pointing downwards, and running into the black of the neck, (which has a patch of white on the side,) nape, and back; the sides of the head are white; chin, throat, and breast, dull white, with a tinge of brown on the sides, the feathers brownish black in the centre; back, white, barred across with black, and black downwards.

The wings expand to the width of one foot; underneath they are greyish black, with white bars; greater wing coverts, black, spotted with white; lesser wing coverts, black; primaries, dull black; the first quill is very short, the third, fourth, and fifth nearly equal, the fourth the longest in the wing, the second and seventh the same length, nearly as short as the first; the outer webs have angular spots of white, and the inner webs rounded ones, almost forming white bars; secondaries, dull black, very broad, and abruptly rounded; tertiaries, dull black; greater and lesser under wing coverts, white, with a few oval-shaped greyish black spots. The four middle feathers of the tail are black, the two next have white marks at the tip, the fourth is white, black at the base and tip; the fifth, white, with five black bars; the outer, black, with a white spot near the tip; underneath it is dull black and yellowish white; upper tail coverts, black; under tail coverts, spotted with dusky. Legs, lead-coloured, small, and not robust; they are feathered two-thirds of their length down in front, and the remaining part is scaled; toes, lead-colour, yellowish beneath; claws, lead-coloured, black at the tips, short, weak, and dull.

The female wants the red on the head, which is yellowish white, and there is more white on the side



of the head; the black of her plumage is more dull than in the male, and the white less pure.

In the young bird, the red on the head, which is assumed in the autumn, is at first interspersed with white; the iris, chesnut; the breast, light chocolate-colour, with dusky streaks.





HAIKY WOODPECKER

## HAIRY WOODPECKER.

*Picus villosus*,

LINNÆUS. GMELIN.

*Picus*—A bird that makes holes in trees, supposed to be the Woodpecker. *Villosus*—Hairy.

I AM here also indebted to W. F. W. Bird, Esq., for a careful collection of the different accounts of this species as a British bird. Dr. Latham's is as follows:—"This has been met with in England, but I have only heard of two or three instances of the circumstance; one, in particular, communicated by the late Mr. Bolton, of Stannary, near Halifax, Yorkshire, of a pair being shot among the old trees in the park of Sir George Armitage, Baronet, at Kirklees Hall, where they no doubt had been bred, but the wood being cut down the succeeding winter, the rest forsook the ground, and could not be traced further. The above pair were presented to the late Duchess Dowager of Portland, in whose collection I saw them many years since. These birds answered to the general description in every particular, except in not having the red bar across the back of the head so complete, there being only a patch of that colour on each side of the head." So also says Wilson.

In the "British Cyclopædia," vol. iii., page 447, it is observed, "This is understood to be a discursive bird, at least to a considerable extent, for a specimen or two are reported to have made their appearance in

England; and either it, or a species very similar, has been found in the eastern parts of Siberia. That an American Woodpecker should find its way to Siberia is by no means unlikely; coming to England, however, is a different matter." The writer of the above does not seem to have calculated that though the difficulty may have been great, for a Woodpecker to cross the Atlantic, yet that having got, on his own shewing, to Siberia, this "overland route" removes the said difficulty at once; and Whitby being on our north-east coast, is in favour of the supposition that this course may have been followed by the specimen presently to be spoken of, as well as by the other two previously met with in the same county.

This Woodpecker is common in North America, where it frequents orchards.

One of these birds, a female, was shot near Whitby, in Yorkshire, in the beginning of the year 1849, as recorded in the "Zoologist," pages 2496-2497, by Mr. Edmund Thomas Higgins, of York. Another was received from Worcestershire, about the year 1846, by W. F. W. Bird, Esq., which there seems no reason to doubt was killed in that county.

The motto of the midshipman on the mast, "I aspire," is in practice adopted by our present subject, as by all the rest of its genus; and doubtless it does often "swarve the mainmast tree," the very same "tall pi" while growing yet in its native forest, which is afterwards to be "toss'd on the stormy sea" in some goodly man-of-war or portly merchantman: upwards the bird toils in quest of the means to support him in life. The Hairy Woodpecker is by no means shy; frequently approaching the farm-house and the outskirts of the town, and pursuing its search for food in the trees,

while people are constantly passing immediately below.

Its flight is described as "consisting of alternate risings and sinkings."

The food of this species consists of insects and their larvæ; and these it extracts from fissures in the bark, and holes in branches of trees.

The note "is strong, shrill, and tremulous; they have also a single note or 'chuck,' which they often repeat, in an eager manner, as they hop about and dig into the crevices of the tree."

Nidification begins in May, when a branch already hollow is pitched upon, or a fresh opening is made. "In the former case," says Wilson, "I have known his nest more than five feet distant from the mouth of the hole; and, in the latter, he digs first horizontally, if in the body of the tree, six or eight inches, and then downwards, obtusely, for twice that distance; carrying up the chips with his bill, and scraping them out with his feet. They also not unfrequently choose the orchard for breeding in, and even an old stake of the fence, which they excavate for this purpose."

The eggs are white, five, or thereabouts, in number, and are laid in June.

Male; length, eight or nine inches; bill, bluish horn-colour, straight, grooved, and wedged at the end; from its base a white band passes under the eye, almost forming by a junction a ring round the back of the neck; beneath it is a black band; over the eye is a broad white band, and a black line runs through it, widening as it descends; tufts of bristles, or hair-like feathers, of a dull yellowish white colour, surround the base of the bill. Head, on the crown, black, behind, scarlet, sometimes with black intermixed; neck and nape, black; throat and breast, white; back, black.

and below, black, white on the middle; down its middle the feathers are loose, webbed, and of a hairy appearance.

The wings expand to the width of one foot three inches; greater and lesser wing coverts, black, each feather with two or three rounded white spots on the outer and inner webs; primaries and secondaries, black, slightly tinged with brown, with eight, (five on the former and three on the latter,) well-defined, rather elongated spots of white on the outer web, and rounded patches of white on the inner web, forming eight distinct bands; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth feathers tipped on the outer web with white; shafts, black; the first feather is very short, the second two inches longer than the first, and one inch shorter than the third; third, fourth, fifth, and sixth feathers nearly of equal length, but the fourth and the fifth rather the longest in the wing. The tail, of ten feathers, has the four middle feathers black, stiff, and pointed, the next on each side black on the inner half, white on the outer, most of the latter on the outer web, two outer feathers on each side white, tipped with a brownish burnt colour; upper tail coverts, black or greyish black; under tail coverts, white. Legs, toes, and claws, blackish blue, the latter are very strong.

The female is black on the back of the head, and the white of the chin, throat, and breast is tinged with brown.







GREEN-TAILED WOODPECKER.

## THREE-TOED WOODPECKER.

## NORTHERN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER.

<i>Picus tridactylus</i> ,	LINNÆUS.
<i>Apterus tridactylus</i> ,	SWAINSON.
<i>Picoides tridactylus</i> ,	LACEPÈDE.

*Picus*—A bird that makes holes in trees, supposed to be the Woodpecker. *Tridactylus*—Three-fingered.

THIS species, as conveyed by its specific name, is without the hind toe. It is a native of the "far west," being very common in the northern parts of North America, from whence, by Kamtschatka, it spreads into the north-eastern parts of Europe—Siberia, Russia, Norway, Sweden, Lapland, especially in Dalecarlia, and is also found in the mountain gorges of Switzerland and the Tyrol, where it breeds, and occasionally in Germany and France. Temminck, however, considers that the American and European species are distinct.

The pine forests which fringe the lower sides and ravines of mountainous districts, are the especial resort of this bird.

I insert this species on the authority of Donovan, vi. plate 143: Mr. G. R. Gray, in his "List of the British Birds in the British Museum," who gives the "north of Scotland" as the place of its occurrence; "Stephens' General Zoology;" Edwards and others; and the "Zoologist List of Birds."

These birds do not migrate, but in the severity of winter some make their way southwards, in America to the United States, and probably the like is the case in Europe.

No sooner has the Woodpecker toiled up to the summit that it has been seeking to reach, than it finds the prospect a barren one, and the most that it has gained has been a temporary supply of necessary food; again it must begin, again, and again, and yet again. 'Telle est la vie.' How often! But I must not moralise, nor think that I am writing a sermon. I can, however, do better—recommend my readers to study the "wisdom of Solomon," and to profit by it.

Wilson says that this species is easily decoyed by imitating its voice.

Its food consists of insects and their eggs, caterpillars, and sometimes seeds and berries.

A hole in a pine tree is the favourite receptacle for the eggs of the Three-toed Woodpecker; and these, four or five in number, are of a brilliant whiteness.

Male; length, between nine and ten inches; the bill, which is remarkably broad and flattened along the basal part, is bluish grey above, whitish beneath at the base; the tip is obtuse—a white mark between it and the eye; iris, bluish black; from it a white line runs to the nape, where it spreads out; another proceeds in like manner under the eye, dilating sooner, and under it is a black one, which runs into the black of the back; thick and long blackish bristles, white at the base, and somewhat mixed with reddish white, are about the base of the bill. Forehead, glossy black, with purple and greenish reflections, as have all the black parts of the plumage, and thickly spotted with white; head, on the sides, black, and the rest black,

except the crown, which is pale yellow, faintly tinged with orange, with white specks shining through, and spotted around as the forehead, which perhaps disappear with age; neck, behind, and nape, black, as described above; chin and throat, white; breast, white, thickly waved and barred on the sides with black; in very old birds the white prevails; back, black; the feathers on the middle part are downy, and barred with white.

The wings, which expand to the width of one foot four inches, reach to two-thirds the length of the tail; greater wing coverts, dull black, in some specimens a little spotted with white; lesser wing coverts, glossy black; primaries, dull black, tipped with white, (so at least says Swainson, but Wilson says that none of the quill feathers are tipped with white,) and spotted with white square spots on their margins, larger on the inner webs and as they approach the base; the first is the longest, and hardly longer than the seventh; the four following ones are subequal and longest; secondaries, dull black, some of them tipped with white; the inner web only is spotted, the spots taking the appearance of bands; tertiaries, dull black; larger and lesser under wing coverts, white, barred with black. The tail, of twelve feathers, has the four middle feathers brownish black, and acute; the next on each side also acute, black at the base, yellowish white at the end, obliquely and irregularly tipped with black; the two next are yellowish white at the tip, banded with black on the inner web at the base, the outer one of the two being somewhat rounded, and having the white purer; the outermost one short and rounded, and banded throughout with black and pure white; upper tail coverts, in some specimens spotted a little with white; under tail coverts, white, except at the base, where they partake

of the black waves of the breast. Legs, lead-coloured, feathered in front for nearly half their length, the feathers white, slightly barred with black; toes, lead-coloured; claws, lead-coloured, much curved, and acute.

The female is less than the male; head, on the sides and back, glossy greenish black; she wants the yellow on the crown, the top of the head being thickly spotted with white, or, as described by Gould, white, interspersed with five black bars. In other respects the female exactly resembles the male.

In the young the bands on the side of the head are obscure and narrower; the feathers of the crown are tipped with white, constituting thick dots on that part, to which they give a silvery appearance; the yellow of the crown is gradually assumed by the young male, being at first of a pale lemon-colour, through which white dots are for some time seen; these are very conspicuous in the female at first, without any yellow, but she loses them entirely when adult; the neck, on the back, is more or less varied with white. The breast is more thickly waved with black; the back is banded with white, which gives to that part a waved appearance. The tail has six feathers almost wholly black, and the outer ones have only two or three whitish spots on the outer web.





GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO.

## GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO.

*Cuculus glandarius*,

LATHAM. GOULL

*Cuculus*—A term of reproach. *Glandarius*—Of or  
belonging to acorns.

THE northern and western coasts of Africa are the native regions of this species, and it also occasionally dwells in the southern parts of Europe bordering on the Mediterranean—Spain, France, and Italy; it has been met with also in Germany.

One specimen has occurred in Ireland, apparently fatigued, as if after a long flight: whence it had flown, is indeed, as Aristophanes says, “hard to say.” It was observed, pursued by Hawks, on the Island of Omagh, and having taken refuge in a hole in a stone wall, was captured by two persons who were walking there. It was fed and kept alive for four days. The month of March, in the year 1842, is said to have been the time of its occurrence. It was subsequently obtained by Mr. Ball, for the museum of Trinity College, Dublin, where it is now preserved.

Male; length, one foot three inches and a half; bill, bluish black; iris, yellow; a crest of considerable length proceeds from the top and back of the head; head, on the front and sides, dark ash-colour; throat and breast, light reddish white; back, greyish black. Greater and lesser wing coverts, greyish black; primaries, the fourth is the longest in the wing; greater and lesser under



wing coverts, white; the tail has the middle feathers eight inches long, the outer one but four inches and three-quarters; the two centre feathers are brown, the outer ones darker, but all tipped with white; upper tail coverts, greyish black; under tail coverts, white; legs, toes, and claws, bluish black.

In the young the head and crest are darker-coloured; the throat and upper part of the breast, light reddish brown; the back more inclining to reddish brown, with slight reflections of green; primaries, rufous, tinged with greenish brown towards the points, which are pure white.





YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO.

## YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO.

AMERICAN YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO. VIRGINIAN  
 CUCKOO. CAROLINA CUCKOO. COW-BIRD. RAIN-CROW.

<i>Cuculus Americanus</i> ,	LINNÆUS.
<i>Coccyzus Americanus</i> ,	LINNÆUS. JENYNS.
<i>Cuculus cinereus</i> ,	TEMMINCK.
<i>Cuculus Carolinensis</i> ,	WILSON.
<i>Erythrophrys Americanus</i> ,	SWAINSON.

*Cuculus*—A term of reproach. *Americanus*—American.

THE American Cuckoo, as its name imports, is a native of that continent, that is to say, of the northern division of it, where it is a common bird.

In this country four examples have occurred. One was shot in Cornwall; another in Wales, in the autumn of 1832, on the estate of Lord Cawdor. One near Youghall, in the county of Cork, in the autumn of 1825; and another at Old Connaught, near Bray, in the county of Wicklow, also in the autumn of 1832.

The American Cuckoo frequents the retired glades and deep hollows of lonely woods, the borders of solitary swamps, and also orchards.

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo is a migratory bird, arriving from the more southern parts in the more northern about the 22nd. of April, from whence it returns in the autumn.

It is a shy and solitary species. The female is

remarkably attentive to her nest, and when roused, feigns lameness, after the manner of several other birds, fluttering and trailing her wings to endeavour to decoy any stranger from the spot. The male keeps watch within view, and gives an alarm by his note of the approach of any danger.

Its food consists of insects and caterpillars, as also berries, and it occasionally destroys the eggs of other birds. With the former-named the young are also fed, and both birds unite in the task of providing for them,

The note, resembling the syllables 'kove, kove, kove, kove,' is uttered first slowly, and then faster until it ends so rapidly that the notes seem to run into one another, and it is also repeated backwards with a relative change of time. It appears to have some imitative powers of voice; and hence Wilson imagines its name of Cow-Bird to be derived; but it occurs to me as possible that its note, just described, may have been the origin of it. The name of Rain-bird has also, he says, been applied to it from its being observed to be most clamorous immediately before rain.

The nest is commenced about the end of the first week in May.

This species of Cuckoo does build a nest for itself, though of rude construction, and nearly flat. It is placed on the branch of a tree, and is made of small sticks and twigs, intermixed with weeds and blossoms. Meyer says that it is made of roots and wool.

The eggs, three, four, or five, generally four in number, are of a uniform greenish blue colour, and of a duly proportionate size. As if, however, every kind of Cuckoo must have something peculiar about it, the one before us does not begin to hatch its eggs when all have been laid, but commences at once with the first,

the necessary consequence of which is that each successive egg is hatched later than its predecessor; and thus the family of Cuckoos exhibit various stages of advancement while yet in the nest. The 'rationale' of this is assuredly not as yet "dreamt of in our philosophy."

Male; length, one foot to one foot one inch; bill, rather long, and a little curved, black at the tip above and below; the remainder of the lower part is yellow, and of the upper black, edged with yellow at the base; iris, hazel, but Meyer says yellow, feathered close to the eyelid which is yellow. Head, crown, neck, which on the sides is white, behind, and nape, cinereous brown, with a tinge of olive; chin, throat, and breast, greyish white; back, as the head and nape. The wings expand to the width of one foot four inches; the first quill feather is more than an inch shorter than the second, the second shorter than the third or fourth, but equal to the fifth; the third longer than the fourth, and the longest in the wing; greater and lesser wing coverts, bright rufous; primaries, bright rufous. The tail, of ten feathers, has the two middle feathers cinereous brown, with a slight tinge of olive; the others black, with a broad white space at the end of each of the three outermost; the fourth just tipped with white; the two outer feathers are scarcely half the length of the middle ones; the others gradually shorten to them. The legs, of a light blue colour, black, according to Meyer, are covered on the upper part with large feathers; the toes, two placed behind and two before, are also light blue.

The female closely resembles the male. The four middle tail feathers are cinereous brown, tinged with olive, with a greenish reflection; and the white on the breast is more dull than in the male bird.

## CUCKOO.

COMMON CUCKOO. GOWK.

COG, OF THE ANCIENT BRITISH.

<i>Cuculus canorus,</i>	LINNÆUS. MONTAGU.
<i>Cuculus hepaticus,</i>	LATHAM.
<i>Cuculus canorus rufus,</i>	GMELIN. LATHAM.

*Cuculus*—A term of reproach. *Canorus*—Musical.

“A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!” cried Richard at Bosworth field; and much would the author of the “History of British Birds,” give for more discursive opportunities when he has arrived at so wide a field as the mysterious Cuckoo opens out.

Pleasant is every thought associated with the “Cuckoo’s time o’ coming:” two opinions there will not be about this.

The Common Cuckoo is found throughout the whole of the European continent—in the north, in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Lapland, and Siberia; and in the south, in Greece and its Archipelago, and Italy. In Asia, it is found in Japan, Java, Kamtschatka, Asia Minor, India, and many other parts. In Africa also, in Egypt, and, according to Temminck, in the south of that continent.

In our own country it occurs in every county of England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland; and in the



CUCKOO.





Orkney Islands the Cuckoo is frequently heard. A few breed every season in retired parts of Hoy and Waas: two were killed in Sanday, by Mr. Strang, in September, 1827.

A Cuckoo in the plumage of the first year was killed at Letton, in Norfolk, on the 5th. of May, as recorded by John Henry Gurney, and William Richard Fisher, Esqrs., in their account of the Birds found in that county.

The general appearance of the Cuckoo is strikingly like that of the female Sparrow-Hawk. It frequents localities of the most opposite description—the dreary fen, the wild heath of the open treeless moor, as well as those in which brush-wood abounds, and the well-wooded hedge-rows of the best cultivated districts.

It need hardly be mentioned that the Cuckoo is a migratory bird: “in April come he will,” and that about the middle of the month—generally on the 17th.; it has been heard on the 15th.; once on the 13th., as mentioned by Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, but frequently not until one or other of the days between these dates and the 30th. One was both heard and seen at Malvern, in Worcestershire, a neighbourhood which has been noticed as more than ordinarily abounding in these birds, on the 12th. of January, 1851, as recorded by F. R. Gibbes, Esq., of Northallerton, in “The Naturalist,” page 43; and on the 14th. of April, also in the present year, two were seen by J. O. Harper, Esq., of Norwich, as recorded in “The Naturalist,” page 162. One of them was heard at the same time, and the other was shot, and proved to have been carrying its egg in its bill. The males arrive a day or two before the females; and the old birds leave the country in the autumn, before the young ones. The general time for the former to depart

is in the end of July or beginning of August; but it would appear as if, though they commence their outward bound movement from north to south, about this time, that they do not finally quit the land until rather later.

An adult Cuckoo was shot near Thirsk, Yorkshire, by Mr. Johnstone, son of the Rev. Charles Johnstone, Canon of York, on the 14th. of August, in the present year, 1851; and another old one near Leeds, on the 24th. of July, also in this year, by Mr. Bond of that place. Another has been seen on the 31st. of July. The young birds do not leave before September; and have been known in Cornwall until October, and likewise in Oxfordshire, by the Revs. Andrew and Henry Matthews, who also record in their "Catalogue of the Birds of Oxfordshire and its neighbourhood," that "on the 23rd. and 24th. of September, 1848, a Cuckoo was heard singing in the early part of the morning:" another was heard near Belfast, on the 7th. of July, 1838; and another by Mr. W. H. White, on the 28th. of July, as recorded in the "Magazine of Natural History," vol. iv., page 184: this bird was seen for some days afterwards. Again, in "Graves' British Ornithology," the author records that he saw two Cuckoos, on the 26th. and 27th. of August, and heard the former one uttering its well-known note. He too says, that he has known them in October also. On the 14th. of October, 1848, one is mentioned by Martin Curtler, Esq., of Bevere House, near Worcester, as having been shot close to that city; but it must probably have been a young bird. Two young ones were shot in a garden near Tralee, in the county of Kerry, on the 5th. of October.

Occasionally at the time of their departure, considerable numbers of Cuckoos have been seen collected together—sixteen were seen flying in company from the

north-east end of the Grampian hills, in Scotland, towards the German Ocean, distant about half-a-mile. Bishop Stanley relates that a gentleman living on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, opposite to Liverpool, was awoke one morning early in the spring—the time of their arrival, by a chattering noise, with an occasional ‘cuckoo,’ in a low plantation near his house, which he found to proceed from a pretty large flock of these birds, which at sunrise, or soon after, took flight: three or four, or more are not unfrequently seen together. In the county of Down, in Ireland, from the 18th. to the 22nd. of July, not less than forty were once observed feeding on the caterpillars that infest gooseberry trees.

In several instances the Cuckoo has been kept, great care being used, through the winter, until the following spring; one for nearly two years, and it was then only killed by accident; and Buffon says, “Though cunning and solitary, the Cuckoo may be given some sort of education: several persons of my acquaintance have reared and tamed them. One of these tame Cuckoos knew its master, came at his call, followed him to the chase, perched on his gun, and if it found a cherry tree in its way, it would fly to it, and not return until it had eaten plentifully; sometimes it would not return to its master for a whole day, but followed him at a distance, flying from tree to tree. In the house it might range at will, and passed the night on the roost.”

Not only is the Cuckoo when come to maturity, a bird of marvel, but even from the very first, the chapter of its strange proceedings commences.—The instinctive propensity of the young one to turn out of the nest, by forcible ejectment, any other occupants, its lawful tenants by right of primogeniture who may have been preserved from previous expulsion, is well known. “Two

Cuckoos and a Hedge-Sparrow," says Dr. Jenner, in his account of this strange bird, published in the "Transactions of the Royal Society," for the year 1788, "were hatched in the same nest, this morning, (June 27th., 1787:) one Hedge-Sparrow's egg remained unhatched. In a few hours after a contest began between the Cuckoos for the possession of the nest, which continued undetermined till the next afternoon; when one of them, which was somewhat superior in size, turned out the other, together with the young Hedge-Sparrow and the unhatched egg. This contest was very remarkable—the combatants alternately appeared to have the advantage, as each carried the other several times nearly to the top of the nest, and then sank down again, oppressed by the weight of its burden; till at length, after various efforts, the strongest prevailed, and was afterwards brought up by the Hedge-Sparrows."

In some instances, as for example where the nest is built on the ground, and especially if in a hollow, it may be impossible for the young Cuckoo to turn out his companion or companions, and in one such case four young Wagtails were found lying dead beneath the usurper of their abode. Other birds who have young in the vicinity, display great apparent repugnance to the young Cuckoo. On the other hand there is an instance of an exactly opposite character, related in the "Magazine of Natural History," vol. vi., page 83, by Mr. Ensor. In the neighbourhood of Ardress, the son of a tenant found a Cuckoo in the nest of a Titlark. "He brought it home, and fed it. In a few days, two Wrens, which had a nest with eight eggs, in the eaves, and just above the window fronting the cage in which the Cuckoo was placed, made their way through a broken pane, and continued to feed it for some time.

The cage was small, and the boy preferring a Thrush to the Cuckoo, took it away, to give greater room to the Thrush. On this the Wrens repaired to their own nest, and brought out the eggs that had been laid."

Bishop Stanley relates the two following somewhat similar incidents:—"A young Cuckoo was taken from the nest of a Hedge-Sparrow, and in a few days afterwards, a young Thrush, scarcely fledged, was put into the same cage. The latter could feed itself, but the Cuckoo, its companion, was obliged to be fed with a quill; in a short time, however, the Thrush took upon itself the task of feeding its fellow-prisoner, and continued so to do with the utmost care, bestowing every possible attention, and manifesting the greatest anxiety to satisfy its continual craving for food.

The following is a still more extraordinary instance, corroborating the above, and for the truth of which we can vouch in every particular:—A young Thrush, just able to feed itself, had been placed in a cage; a short time afterwards, a young Cuckoo, which could not feed itself, was introduced into the same cage, a large wicker one, and for some time it was with much difficulty fed; at length, however, it was observed that the young Thrush was employed in feeding it, the Cuckoo opening its mouth and sitting on the upper perch, and making the Thrush hop down to fetch food up. One day, when it was thus expecting its food in this way, the Thrush seeing a worm put into the cage could not resist the temptation of eating it, upon which the Cuckoo immediately descended from its perch, and attacking the Thrush, literally tore one of its eyes quite out, and then hopped back: the poor Thrush felt itself obliged to take up some food in the lacerated state it was in. The eye healed in course of time, and the Thrush continued its

occupation as before, till the Cuckoo was full grown."

Mr. Jesse too, in his "Gleanings in Natural History," relates the following circumstance as having occurred at Arbury, in Warwickshire, the seat of Francis Newdigate, Esq., the account having been written down at the time by a lady who witnessed it:—"In the early part of the summer of 1828, a Cuckoo, having previously turned out the eggs from a Water-Wagtail's nest, which was built in a small hole in a garden wall at Arbury, deposited her own egg in their place. When the egg was hatched, the young intruder was fed by the Water-Wagtails, till he became too bulky for his confined and narrow quarters, and in a fidgetty fit he fell to the ground. In this predicament he was found by the gardener, who picked him up, and put him into a wire cage, which was placed on the top of a wall, not far from the place of his birth. Here it was expected that the Wagtails would have followed their supposititious offspring with food, to support it in its imprisonment; a mode of proceeding which would have had nothing very uncommon to recommend it to notice. But the odd part of the story is, that the bird which hatched the Cuckoo never came near it; but her place was supplied by a Hedge-Sparrow, who performed her part diligently and punctually, by bringing food at very short intervals from morning till evening, till its uncouth foster-child grew large, and became full-feathered, when it was suffered to escape, and was seen no more. It may possibly be suggested that a mistake has been made with regard to the sort of bird which hatched the Cuckoo, and that the same bird which fed it, namely, the Hedge-Sparrow, hatched the egg. If this had been the case, there would have been nothing extraordinary in the circumstance; but the Wagtail was

too often seen on her nest, both before the egg was hatched, and afterwards, feeding the young bird, to leave room for any scepticism on that point; and the Sparrow was seen feeding it in the cage afterwards by many members of the family daily."

In "The Naturalist," old series, No. 16, page 7, Mr. W. H. Benschel relates an instance of two Wagtails feeding a young Cuckoo, which had been taken from their nest; and on its being placed in a hive, where they could visit it, "delight and joy really appeared in all their actions. They rushed to and fro in the air, flying about the hive, and hovering near it." At the same time, on seeing the Cuckoo;—Swallows gave their note of alarm, and their young flew off; a Wren approached, and shewed some signs of curiosity; and a Robin, who seemed disposed for hostilities, was attacked and driven off by the Wagtails.

Again, "It is wonderful," says Dr. Jenner, "to see the extraordinary exertions of the young Cuckoo, when it is two or three days old, if a bird be put into the nest with it that is too weighty for it to lift out. In this state it seems ever restless and uneasy. But this disposition for turning out its companions begins to decline from the time it is two or three, till it is about twelve days old, when, as far as I have hitherto seen, it ceases. Indeed, the disposition for throwing out the egg appears to cease a few days sooner; for I have frequently seen the young Cuckoo, after it had been hatched nine or ten days, remove a nestling that had been placed in the nest with it, when it suffered an egg, put there at the same time, to remain unmolested. The singularity of its shape is well adapted to these purposes; for different from other newly-hatched birds, its back, from the shoulders downwards, is very broad,



with a considerable depression in the middle. This depression seems formed by nature for the design of giving a more secure lodgment to an egg, or a young bird, when the young Cuckoo is employed in removing either of them from the nest. When it is about twelve days old, this cavity is quite filled up; and then the back assumes the shape of nestling birds in general."

The young Cuckoo is for the most part hatched before the eggs of its foster-parent, if any have been left to be incubated; and in the latter case it loses no time in asserting its usurped rights, but generally on the very day after it is hatched, its might takes the place of right, and one by one the true-born birds are thrown out, to be killed by the fall, or by any other mishap that may befall them. If it should happen that one or more of the little birds should be, by some means or other, preserved in the nest, their parent feeds them and the interloper with the like attention; making it to appear that she cannot discriminate between them. 'Tros Tyriusve' share equally her maternal care; and this even after leaving the nest, both on the ground and in trees. A Robin has been known so devoted in its attention that it came to feed out of a person's hand to obtain sufficient food for its adopted child. One instance is mentioned in the "Zoologist," page 1637, by Mr. J. W. Slater, of Manchester, as having been witnessed by Mr. Beech, of Droylsden, in which the young birds of a Meadow Pipit having been found on the ground outside the nest in which was a young Cuckoo, and having been replaced to see what would happen; the parent birds, on their return "immediately threw out their own offspring, to make room for the parasite." They do the same with their own eggs if replaced.

As before hinted, the adult Cuckoo occasionally herself destroys, by throwing out, one or more of the eggs of the bird into whose nest she surreptitiously introduces her own. But how does she introduce them? Here again is another singularity! It is perfectly certain that in some instances she conveys them in her bill into the other birds' nests—it has been already mentioned that one was shot with her egg actually in her bill—Spurzheim says he has seen one carrying it in her feet. Mr. Williamson, the curator of the Scarborough Museum, found the egg of one in a nest which was placed so close under a hedge, that the Cuckoo could not possibly have got into it; and T. Wolley, Esq., records another similar instance, communicated to him by Mr. Bartlett, of Little Russell Street, London, in which he found one in the nest of a Robin, which was placed in so small a hole that the same mode must have been resorted to. So again, Dr. Jenner has related an instance in which the egg was placed in the nest of a Wagtail, built under the eaves of a cottage. The like proceeding must have been adopted in all cases where the Wren's nest, which is a covered one, has been made use of; and in fact, excepting in such as that of the Lark, which is built on the open ground, most of the nests in which the Cuckoo lays, are built in such thick and tangled parts of hedges, that it is next to impossible for so large a bird as the Cuckoo to approach them bodily. R. A. Julian, Esq., Junior, records in "The Naturalist," page 162, that F. Barlow, Esq., of Cambridge, found a Cuckoo's egg in a Redstart's nest, in a hole in an old willow tree, which he had great difficulty in getting out, the aperture being only about an inch wide. The Cuckoo has been seen removing the egg of a small bird from a nest,

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in which she had just placed her own changeling, by the same mode by which in cases where she could not otherwise, if not in all, she introduces her own, namely in her bill. Cuckoos do not pair, but are polygamus, the reason of which has been suggested to be that parental care is not required for the young. They are bold and fierce birds, and ruffle up their feathers in displeasure at an early age.

The flight of the Cuckoo is steady and straight forward. At times he may be seen perched upon a rail, branch, or eminence, swinging himself round with outspread tail, and uttering his note the while in an odd and observable manner.

The food of the Cuckoo, generally procured in bushes or trees, but sometimes on the ground, consists of insects, spiders, and caterpillars; and White of Selborne says seeds, but they may have been accidentally swallowed with the insects. There seems some slight reason for supposing that the Cuckoo will eat the eggs of other birds, possibly those which she takes out to make room for her own; and one instance is mentioned by Bishop Stanley, in his "Familiar History of British Birds," in which the flock of Cuckoos, observed in the county of Down, devoured, or at least pulled in pieces the greater part of a late brood of young Blackbirds in the nest. The Cuckoo's food being insects, it is guided, one should say by instinct, but that its instinct is, as will appear, by no means unerring in this respect, to lay its egg generally in the nest of an insectivorous bird, for the most part in that of a Robin, or a Dunnock. It does not, however, invariably do so, the egg having been found, as hereafter mentioned, in the nest of a Greenfinch, a Linnet, and a Chaffinch. It is, however, on the other hand, very remarkable that such birds as

these latter will very often, though not always, in such case, feed the young Cuckoo with insects; their own most natural food being grain, and with which latter, when prepared in their own craw, they feed their own young. Even a Canary, in whose cage a young Cuckoo was lodged, fed it with caterpillars placed there for the purpose, instead of with the seed on which she herself was always accustomed to feed. At times, however, birds of the Finch tribe, at whose door these unwelcome foundlings have been dropped, supply them with young wheat, vetches, tender blades of grass, and seeds of different kinds.

The small bird has been known even to follow its foster-child into a cage, and to feed it there, as well as in other instances to attend upon it outside the cage. William Reynolds, Esq., of Walton, near Glastonbury, Somersetshire, has written me word of an instance of this in the case of a Robin; and of another which fed her charge within thirty feet of a constant thoroughfare. The aperture to the nest was only three inches and a half wide, and when the young Cuckoo found himself becoming rather straitened in his circumstances, he worked himself out, and fell down, which led to his discovery and capture; but when able to fly he was restored to liberty.

Again, it is a fact worthy of being remarked in connexion with the above, though militating strangely against the general theory to be deduced from it, that small birds will very frequently, perhaps as frequently as they suffer the Cuckoo's egg to remain in their nest, turn it out. If then they have this antipathy, certainly no unreasonable one, against the unwarrantable intrusion, how are they influenced to their more than ordinary and even, so to speak, unnatural care of their supposititious foster-children?

The Cuckoo drinks frequently. They may often be seen pursued, or rather followed by small birds, especially by Titlarks, which can hardly be wondered at after the facts here mentioned, which may also well leave it in doubt whether it be in hostility, or a kind of stupid and wondering admiration. Swifts join in the pursuit, though the Cuckoo does not lay her egg in their nests: their migration is too early for her young.

The food of the young Cuckoo consists of caterpillars, small snails, grasshoppers, flies, and beetles, but in either case, whether it be their natural, or rather their unnatural parents, or their foster-parents that purvey for them; they are insatiable in their cravings for food, and their continual cry, like *Oliver Twist*, is for "more! more!" Equally earnest is the foster-parent in providing for their wants: one has been seen to alight on the back of the intruder who filled her nest, the better to supply it with food.

But, though the Cuckoo entrusts her offspring in the unaccountable and extraordinary way that she does to the fostering care of an alien species, she does not altogether lose sight of it, but keeps in the neighbourhood, and, it may be, even takes it in some degree under her own protection after it has left the nest. This observation has just been corroborated to me by G. Grantham, Esq., and certain it is that in some places, probably the same where her egg has been deposited, you will hear the note of one or the other of the parents from day to day for a considerable time. Nay, more than this, it has been indisputably established that the Cuckoo, doubtless the female will, on occasion it may be, but certainly occasionally, feed her own young. This interesting fact was witnessed in the past year, 1850, by J. Mc'Intosh, Esq., of Charminster,

Dorsetshire, who was so obliging as to communicate it to me in the first instance, and has since published a notice of it in the pages of "The Naturalist" Magazine. In the instance he mentions, a Cuckoo laid her egg in the nest of a Dunnock, in which the latter subsequently laid four eggs. The young birds hatched from these were dislodged soon after their birth, and simultaneously their parent disappeared also—a victim perhaps to grief, the gun of some fowler, or the talons of a cat. The want then of her care may have been the cause of the Cuckoo from thenceforth looking after her own young one, over whom she must in such case have been keeping some watch; and the like may have been the cause in some of the other similar instances, which have indubitably occurred. Mr. Mc'Intosh distinctly saw the parent Cuckoo in question feed its young one, from day to day, with the greatest care and attention, with caterpillars; for which it flew over the wall into the adjoining garden, in which they were abundantly to be procured. The indigestible part of the food of the Cuckoo is cast up, as in the case of the Hawks, in pellets.

Mr. William Kidd, of Hammersmith, relates the following:—"A few years since, the sight of a Redbreast feeding a young Cuckoo, assisted by the old Cuckoo, was witnessed by a most truthful and worthy ornithologist, a friend of mine, now no more. His animated countenance is even now before me, whilst relating minutely, and with intense interest, the singular and ridiculous disparity observable between the natural and the putative parent." He adds, "nor is this by any means a solitary instance of the natural affection of the Cuckoo." Mr. Blyth, too, says "it is certain that the maternal feelings of the Cuckoo are not quenched: astonishing as this may

appear, Mr. John E. Gray, of the British Museum, informs me that he has himself seen a Cuckoo, day after day, visit the nest where one of its offspring was being reared, and which it finally enticed away from its foster-parents. I had previously heard of analogous cases."

Again, in the "History of the Birds of Melbourne," in Derbyshire, given by J. J. Briggs, Esq., in the "Zoologist," he writes, "I believe that, although confiding her young to the care of other birds, the Cuckoo does not entirely forget them. I am strengthened in this opinion by a fact which fell under my notice in June, 1849. As I was walking over a particular part of this parish, with a dog, I was struck with the remarkable actions of a Cuckoo. It came flying about me within a hundred yards, seeming agitated and alarmed, and occasionally struck down at the dog in the same manner as the Lapwing does. It immediately occurred to me that the bird had young near, and that these actions were the result of maternal solicitude. I examined the neighbouring hedge-rows in order to find the nest, but without avail. The next day a neighbouring farmer told me that he had something to shew me, which proved to be a young Cuckoo in the nest of a Hedge-Sparrow, and the place where the nest was situated was but a very short distance from the spot where the old Cuckoo had attracted my attention in the manner described."

I must here observe that the statement of Mr. Mc'Intosh is strongly confirmed by the statement of the Rev. Mr. Stafford, communicated by Pennant to the Hon. Daines Barrington, and recorded by Derham in a manuscript paper on Instinct. Walking in Glossop Dale, in the Peak of Derbyshire, he disturbed a Cuckoo from a nest in which were two young ones, "and very frequently, for many

days, beheld the old Cuckoo feed there her young ones." Probably only one of them was her own veritable offspring, and it is equally probable that she did not know which was which. Certain it is that such a statement as this of a fact, repeatedly witnessed, cannot be lightly received by an impartial and unwarped judgment. But it is further corroborated by another recorded instance. The Rev. Mr. Wilmot, of Morley, near Derby, wrote Dr. Darwin word of the occurrence of a similar fact:—In the month of July 1792, he was attending some labourers on a farm, when one of them told him that he had observed a bird "exactly like a Cuckoo" sitting upon a nest. This it must be observed is a third evidence, all three deponents being perfectly unprejudiced and unbiassed. The Rev. Mr. Wilmot proceeds:—"He took me to the spot; it was in an open fallow ground. The bird was upon the nest; I stood and observed her some time, and was perfectly satisfied it was a Cuckoo....In the nest....I observed three eggs. As I had labourers constantly at work in that field, I went thither every day, and always looked if the bird was there, but did not disturb it for seven or eight days, when I was tempted to drive it from the nest; and found two young ones that appeared to have been hatched for some days, but there was no appearance of the third egg." This circumstance also, is in some degree confirmatory. The other egg may have been that of the original framer of the nest, for we need not suppose with Dr. Fleming, from the previous instance, that the Cuckoo sometimes makes a nest for herself. "I then mentioned this extraordinary circumstance, for such I thought it, to Mr. and Mrs. Holyoake, of Bidford Grange, Warwickshire, and to Miss M. Willes, who were on a visit at my house, and who all went



to see it.”—Three more witnesses let it be observed. “Very lately I reminded Mr. Holyoake of it, who told me he had a perfect recollection of the whole, and that considering it a curiosity, he walked to look at it several times, and was perfectly satisfied as to its being a Cuckoo.”

The note of the cuckoo, uttered both when flying and perched in trees, is expressed by its name. It is often however, varied from the plain ‘cuckoo,’ to a quicker ‘cuckoo; cuckoo; cuc-cuc-koo.’ Both the male and female birds utter it, but the latter, it may be, only seldom; though I am inclined to think that it is equally common to both. They have besides another soft note, rendered by the syllables ‘cule, cule,’ uttered rapidly, and continually repeated several times; another exclamation of anger, and another more like the bark of a little dog: the young bird has a plaintive chirp. The female, as I imagine it to be, has also a very different note, which I can best liken, so at least I did most carefully some years ago, when I heard it, to the words ‘witchet-witchet-watchet.’ This note, preceded immediately by the ordinary ‘cuckoo,’ I heard myself most distinctly uttered from the throat of one and the same individual bird, flying only a few yards from me, over an open field, so that there could be no possibility of any mistake; and this undoubted fact may possibly suffice to set at rest the unfounded supposition that the female Cuckoo does not cry ‘cuckoo;’ for I have not yet heard it theorized that the male bird utters the note in question, which has been described as a “harsh chatter.” The Italian proverb says, ‘i fatti sono maschii, le parole femine’—‘Facts are masculine, talk is feminine:’ one is worth a hundred baseless fancies.

That both the male and female utter the word ‘cuckoo,’

is also thought by Mr. Yarrell, and most decidedly maintained by Mr. Blyth, who gives in the "Magazine of Natural History," vol. viii., page 329, one unquestionable instance of a female having been shot while in the act of repeating the well-known note. The Cuckoo has been heard singing its song at night, near Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, by T. Bell Salter, Esq., at nine, ten, and eleven o'clock; and on one occasion it was continued, as he was informed, till two o'clock in the morning. Another has been heard to commence its song at a quarter past two; and another at half-past three. At times, and especially, it is said, in warm weather, it sings all through the night, even though there be no moon. A young Cuckoo has been known to repeat the note of a Titlark, by whom it had been so far educated. The note of the Cuckoo, like that of other great vocalists, is much affected by the weather; in times of drought it becomes hoarse, but is mollified again by the summer shower.

At this stage of the account of the Cuckoo, its nidification should be described; but, as is so well known, there is none to describe. It deposits its parasitical eggs in the nest of some other small bird, for which they are not too large, being singularly small in proportion to its own size—just one-quarter what they should be in proportion to those of small birds than which they are themselves four times larger. If the Cuckoo's egg were larger than it is, it would require to be laid in a larger nest, with the natural possessors of which, the young one, as Mr. Selby points out, would be, or might be unable successfully, to cope. And first, to mention the different species of birds with whose domestic arrangements it so unscrupulously makes free. The following have been already

ascertained, and doubtless there are others to be added to the list, or, even if not, there would be, did the parent Cuckoo stand in need of such, failing those about to be enumerated. These are the Dunnock, commonly called the Hedge-Sparrow, the Robin, the Titlark, the Pied Wagtail, the Redstart, the Whitethroat, the Willow Warbler, the Rock Lark, the Sky Lark, the Reed Warbler, the Reed Bunting, the Sedge Warbler, the Willow Wren, the Yellow-Hammer, the Blackbird, the Wren, the Thristle, the Whinchat, the Greenfinch, the Grasshopper Warbler, the Chaffinch, and the Red-backed Shrike.

Some say that the Cuckoo deposits her egg before the other bird has laid hers, in some instances, and in others afterwards; but in the former case the deceived little bird goes on to lay hers, in happy ignorance of the fate that awaits their embryo contents when hatched. It is, I think, quite an erroneous supposition that the Cuckoo ever meets with any delay in finding a nest suitable for her to lay her egg in. At the time when she does lay, birds' nests of all the common species are abundant in every hedge, and there is no more difficulty in her finding one than another. It has been imagined that she lays her eggs later in the day than other birds; and this possibly may prove to be the case.

Mr. Blyth, alluding to the supposition that the egg of the Cuckoo is already partially advanced towards maturity before being laid, thinks that it is somewhat confirmed by its being, as he argues, impossible for the Cuckoo to lay her egg in the nest of a bird which has already begun to sit; but this is quite inconclusive, for not only do birds sit more or less from the very first, as for instance while laying the second and following eggs, at any of which periods the difficulty he

imagines would be equally in existence, and the Cuckoo could not tell how soon it would be removed, nor could she wait to see; but it must also be remembered that occasionally the bird leaves her eggs for a short time, even after she has begun to sit, which opportunity the Cuckoo might avail herself of; doubtless also her approach, so manifestly a cause of alarm to small birds, as proved by the way in which the latter pursue the former on the wing, might and would have the effect—perhaps the desired and intended effect, of driving off the bird from the nest, that the Cuckoo might, for the time, and for her own ends, usurp her place.

It seems that in most cases where the eggs of small birds are found in nests which contain those of the Cuckoo, the former have been laid after the latter, and in addition, often, to others previously thrown out by the Cuckoo. In one instance six young Titlarks were found in a nest with a young Cuckoo. It appears that the Cuckoo lays her own egg before removing any already in the nest; and her being disturbed in the eviction, may be the cause of the other eggs being sometimes found with hers; for more than once a small bird has been observed resolutely attacking and successfully repelling a Cuckoo from her nest. If there be no egg in the nest at the time that the Cuckoo lays hers, it is asserted that the other bird will turn the Cuckoo's egg out, though she will not if the Cuckoo have removed one or more that have been in it.

The eggs are not laid until the middle of May, and they require about a fortnight's incubation. Montagu found one so late as the 26th. of June; and Mr. Jesse records that a young Cuckoo which had only just left the nest of a Wagtail, was found in Hampton Court Park, on the 18th. of August, 1832. The young birds

are not able to fly in less than five or six weeks.

Occasionally two Cuckoo's eggs are found in one and the same nest; but they are supposed to be those of different birds. It is thought, however, that the Cuckoo lays more than one egg in different nests, and probably more than two, at intervals, in the season—Bewick says from four to six; but I think it must have been a guess; Blumenbach also says six. Mr. M. Capper, of Shirley, informs me that he found on Shirley Common, in the nest of a Meadow Pipit, two Cuckoo's eggs, of dissimilar colouring and size, and therefore probably deposited by two different birds. Lighter-coloured varieties occur.

Male; weight, about four ounces and a half; length, one foot one inch and a half to one foot two inches; bill, black, or blackish brown, and slightly bent, yellowish at the base of the lower one; inside it is red; iris, yellow; head, crown, neck, behind, and nape, dark ash-colour; chin, throat, and breast, above, pale ash-colour, in some specimens inclining to rufous brown; below the latter is dull white, barred across with undulating black lines; back, dark ash-colour. The wings extend to half the length of the tail; greater and lesser wing coverts, as the back, but darker; primaries, dusky, barred on the inner webs with oval white spots from the base to within an inch and a half of their tips; the first feather is very short; secondaries and tertiaries, dusky; larger and lesser under wing coverts, white barred with dusky. The tail, rather long, of ten feathers of unequal length; the two middle ones are black, dashed with ash-colour on the outer edges of the webs, and sometimes a gloss of green, and tipped with white; the others are black, marked with white spots on each side of the shafts; in some the

side feathers have white spots only on their inner webs, but all are tipped with white; the outer feather is very short; upper tail coverts, as the back, but paler; under tail coverts, white, with a tinge of yellowish rust-colour, and crossed with transverse black bars. Legs, yellow; toes, yellow, the outer hind toe is reversible; claws, whitish.

The female is less in size; neck, in front, tawny brown; breast, tawny brown, barred with dusky; greater and lesser wing coverts, marked with light rust-coloured spots; the primaries have the spots inclining to reddish brown on their edges; in the tail the white spots incline to reddish brown on their edges. It is said that in mature age the female assumes the plumage of the male.

It would appear that the young bird does not entirely lose its first feathers until the second year's moult, but that after the first moult, and even this it would almost seem does not take place before these birds leave us in the autumn; the male, both male and female having been alike till then, assumes a deep olive ash-colour, the red spots wearing off, while in the female they continue longer. I think that the moult is continuous and gradual, more so than in most other birds, and, as a matter of course in late-hatched individuals, is thus carried over longer into the ensuing year. Iris, greyish or reddish brown; forehead, white; the head, on the back, has a white patch; crown, dusky black; neck, on the sides, tinged with rufous; on the back and the nape a mixture of dusky black and clear ferruginous; chin, throat, and breast, dull yellowish white, the latter barred across with distant bars of dusky black; each feather has in general two or three bars; back, dusky black and ferruginous, faintly barred with white.

Primaries, more or less barred on the inner webs, the oval spots reddish brown; the side tail feathers more or less barred with white, black, and light brown, and tipped with white; upper tail coverts, slightly tipped with white; legs and toes, light yellow. The young female has more of the reddish brown on her plumage, and has scarcely any indication of the white on the forehead and the white patch on the back of the head.







## NIGHTJAR.

GOATSUCKER. DOR-HAWK. NIGHT-HAWK. FERN-OWL.  
 WHEEL-BIRD. EUROPEAN GOATSUCKER.  
 NOCTURNAL GOATSUCKER. CHURN-OWL. JAR-OWL.  
 PUCKERIDGE.

ADERYN Y DROELL, AND RHODWR, OF THE ANCIENT  
 BRITISH.

<i>Caprimulgus Europæus,</i>	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Caprimulgus punctatus,</i>	MEYER.
<i>Nyctichelidon Europæus,</i>	RENNIE.

*Caprimulgus*—Caper—A goat.      *Mulgeo*—To milk.  
*Europæus*—European.

THE Nightjar may be looked upon as a kind of gigantic and sombre Swallow, whose movements are made in the dusk of night, instead of in the glare of day.

It is found throughout Europe—in Spain, France, Germany, and Italy, Russia, Siberia, and Kamtschatka, Denmark, Norway, and the rest of Scandinavia, and in Holland, but rarely. In Africa also, and in Asia as far as the East Indies.

It is tolerably common in all the southern counties of England, and also indeed in the northern ones.

In Yorkshire it frequents the sea coast near Scarborough, according to Mr. Patrick Hawkrigge, and has

been not unfrequent near Halifax, Hebden-Bridge, and other districts. I have seen it in the neighbourhood of Doncaster, in the wood called "Sir William Cooke's wood" between that town and Armthorpe. It also occurs near Norwich, in fir plantations, as I am informed by Mr. Charles Muskett, who adds, "Three years since, I found a young bird on the ground in a heathy plantation; the old bird led me to search by her dissembling incapacity of flight. I looked again, when it was nearly ready to fly. Being a night-feeder it is seldom destroyed by gamekeepers." Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Cornwall, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, contain localities for this bird; Wales also, and some parts of Ireland, as also of Scotland. In the Orkney Islands, "two were shot at Lopness, during the summer of 1810. One was killed near Kirkwall, by Captain Chisholm, 9th. R. V. B.; and another was obtained at Lopness, by Mr. Strang, on the 1st. of June, 1825." Mr. Dunn mentions the occurrence of one in Shetland.

The Nightjar inhabits woods, both of old and young growth, and also open moors, heaths, and commons, where fern and brushwood afford it shelter.

It is a migratory bird, visiting this country in the middle or end of May—a very late arrival; and leaving again by the middle or end of September, or beginning of October; some say so soon as the end of August: a few individuals, however, stay longer. Montagu records his having shot one in Devonshire, on the 8th. of November, 1805; and Mr. Couch reports that one was shot in Cornwall, on the 27th. of November, 1821.

The remarkable trait in the character of the Nightjar is that it perches lengthwise, instead of crosswise, on the branch of a tree, generally with its head downwards,

according to the inclination of the branch, especially while in the attitude of repose; during the day it crouches very close to it; its brown colour assimilating to that of the bark. They have been seen dusting themselves in the middle of a road. In his "Catalogue of the Birds of Melbourn," in Derbyshire, in the "Zoologist," page 2606, J. J. Briggs, Esq. relates that in 1844 two of these birds were seen near Donnington Park, hawking for insects at mid-day, by the side of a large wood; which perhaps may have been rather a shady situation; and two other such instances are recorded in the fifteenth volume of the "Linnæan Transactions." Such, however, is certainly not their usual habit. Occasionally these birds are to be seen 'couchant' on a stone heap or other eminence, and they also at times bask in the sun on the side of a bank or other such sheltered situation. They are very fearless when they are engaged with their young, and will glance in their fitful phantom way quite close by you. White of Selborne says, "when a person approaches the haunt of the Fern Owls in an evening, they continue flying round the head of the obtruder, and by striking their wings together above their backs, in the manner that the Pigeons called Smiters are known to do, make a smart snap; perhaps at that time they are jealous for their young, and their noise and gesture are intended by way of menace." They are said to be good eating. As many as eight or ten have been seen in one locality together, skimming, like Swallows, over the surface of the ground in search of their prey. When approached in the day-time, they are either fearless, or listless, or taken by surprise; and do not seem intimidated by your approach; hence the idea of their being foolish birds. During the day they rest on the

ground, among fern, broom, or heath, or on the low branch of a tree. At the commencement of twilight, when first roused from their daily slumber, they perch upon some wall or rail, or heap, or eminence; perhaps waiting entomologically for the appearance of the moths.

The powers of flight of this bird are, as the Rev. Gilbert White, of Selborne, has observed, truly wonderful, exceeding, if possible, and in the most easy manner, the various evolutions and quick turns of the Swallows on the wing. "Yet," says another writer, "it flits along, noiseless as a shadow; "not a rustle is heard." At other times, when disturbed, it is abrupt and wavering, though still buoyant."

It is a truly pleasing sight to see the Nightjar circling, in its smooth and effortless way, round and round a tree in the quiet calm that precedes the "stille nacht"—the "heilige nacht"—when all nature is hushed in the deep silence that announces the hour of rest;

"Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds."

Save also, the poet might have added, where the hum of the moth passes nervously by your ear; or the bark of the distant watch-dog suddenly breaks upon the "solemn stillness;" or the shutting of a gate, let fall to by some returning lover or careful shepherd, reminds you of "bygone hours;" or the striking of the bell in the grey tower of the quaint old parish church; the lowing of some stray cattle; the cawing of a few restless Rooks; the cooing of a Wood Pigeon or two; or the wild cry of the Heron, keeps your attention awake, and you "wait a little longer;" or the sudden dash of a startled water-rat into the stream wakes you from a

reverie; or the "rise" of a trout, with a sort of quiet determination, which tells you that he is "on the feed," makes you wish that you had a rod and a landing-net in your hand; and even though you have them not, you cannot help peering over the edge of the bank, almost as anxiously as if you had. Well might Horace sigh for the country; "*O rus quando te aspiciam.*" If you cannot find that happiness which beneficent Providence wills you to enjoy, "in scenes like these," "far," and the farther the better, "from the madding crowd's ignoble strife," believe me you will find it nowhere. Thank God for a love of nature.

But to return to the Nightjar, whom I have left wheeling round the "old oak tree;" from which habit, I may mention, has been derived one of his provincial names.

In flight, the tail is expanded, and the white spots are very conspicuous in the male bird. Now he starts suddenly upwards to a height of thirty or forty feet, and then gradually descends; again he rises in a like series, and then falls as suddenly as before he rose; now he glides round and round, and then forwards in a straight line; now he skims along the ground; and now drops with wings closed above him.

The food of this bird consists of moths, beetles, such as, in their season, the ghost-moths and the cock-chaffers, which abound in the silent air on a summer's night, and any other insects which it can meet with on the wing. In the pursuit of these, Gilbert White says that it uses its feet, the middle toe being furnished with a serrated claw, the use of which is inconclusively supposed to be to grasp and hold the more readily such prey, which may also be the object of the long bristles, 'vibrissæ,' as they are scientifically called, on the bill.

Linnæus Martin thinks that White of Selborne was mistaken in imagining that the bird thus conveyed its food to its bill; and certainly its legs are very short for such a feat; but, on the other hand, as Bishop Stanley remarks, the idea is rather borne out by its evolutions while on the prow; for, as he says, "at twilight, it may sometimes be seen at work, flitting about, hovering now over one spot, then over another, occasionally dropping or tumbling over, as if shot; this is the moment, when having seized a moth, the bird reaches it to its mouth, and loses its balance; when again rising, it glides away like a ghost, till lost in shade."

The general note of this species, partaking of the nature of a hiss and a buzz, uttered upon the tree, but at times on the wing, and prolonged for some minutes, is a mere monosyllabic 'ja-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r'—whence the descriptive name. It has besides a 'dec, dec,' which it utters when launching on the wing, and also a third 'variation'—a sort of squeak. The Nightjar, like the Corncrake, has considerable powers of ventriloquism, for, the cause perhaps being alarm at your approach, when you think that you are close upon the vocalist, it seems, 'presto,' like the "will o' the wisp," to have moved by magic; 'abiit, evasit;' and yet all the while you are as close to it as you were at first. The sound of the Nightjar's hum is exceedingly pleasing to me; it is one thoroughly associated with sylvan scenes.

In the middle or the end of May, nidification, so to speak where no nest is found, commences.

The nest, if a few chance leaves in a hollow of the ground are to be called such, is found in the open rides and walks in woods, as also in their bordering neighbourhood, in moors and barren places, among heath, grass, or fern, from the latter of which one of its

secondary names is derived. It is frequently placed at the foot of a tree or bush.

The eggs are generally two in number, but three have been known in two instances: in one by Mr. Eddison, and in the other by the Rev. J. Pemberton Bartlett, namely, in the latter case, two young birds and an egg. They are very beautiful, and of nearly a perfect oval shape, the ground colour being white, which is most beautifully clouded and streaked with bluish grey and yellowish brown. The eggs are laid the beginning, and the young are hatched in the middle of July.

The whole plumage is remarkably soft and downy. Male; weight, between two and three ounces; length, about ten inches and a half; bill, very short and weak, black, dark brown colour at the tip, the lower one light brown at the base—a few white feathers below the corner of it; it has a tooth on each side of the hooked tip: a line of white runs backwards from its corner; iris, inordinately large, “the better to see with,” and dull black; nine or ten strong bristles, made to diverge or contract, project downwards from the under edge of the upper mandible. Head, on the hinder part of the sides, dark brown, edged below and behind with pale yellowish brown, making a “line of demarcation” between it and the markings of the head and back; the shafts are margined with deep black; crown, pale greyish brown, the ground colour being yellowish white, and dotted over with dusky specks; two dark stripes of blackish brown feathers pass centrally to the nape of the neck; chin and throat, mottled with two large white oval spots, which nearly converge together down the middle, and dull yellowish orange and black, the latter extending backwards round the neck in a sort of collar; breast, pale yellow brown, with numerous



bars of darker brown and orange; back, a mixture of orange, yellow, brown, and grey, beautifully pencilled with rich dark brown, the shafts margined as on the head.

The wings expand to the width of about one foot nine inches; greater and lesser wing coverts, mottled as the back; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dark brown, spotted with yellowish brown; the three first feathers have a well-defined oblong patch of white on the inner web, near the tip; the first is shorter than the third, the second a little longer than the third, and the longest in the wing. The tail, of ten feathers, has the middle ones freckled with grey and yellowish brown, with seven or eight dark zigzag transverse bands; the two outer feathers are dark brown, barred with yellowish brown on both webs, and the ends pure white; the legs, which are partly feathered in front, the toes, which are small in proportion to the size of the bird, and the hinder one reversible, and the claws, dark orange brown; the middle claw is flattened on the inner edge, and the margin is pectinated, forming a sort of comb of seven or eight teeth: these teeth point forwards, and not backwards, which is against the general supposition that they are intended for holding the insects the better. Here, as in so many other instances, we are still in the dark. The toes are connected by a membrane as far as the first joint.

The plumage of the female is more subdued and blended, darker, with less of the grey and ferruginous, and the white markings have a tinge of yellow. The wings want the white spots; the two outer feathers of the tail are without the white at the ends.

In the young the tail does not attain its full length before the first moult. They are at first covered with grey down, darker above and paler beneath.





## SWIFT.

COMMON SWIFT. SWIFT SWALLOW. BLACK MARTIN.  
 SCREECH. SCREECH MARTIN. SCREAMER.  
 CRAN. SQUEALER.

MARTIN DU, OF THE ANCIENT BRITISH.

<i>Hirundo apus</i>	LINNÆUS. PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Cypselus murarius,</i>	SELBY. GOULD.
<i>Cypselus apus,</i>	JENYNS.
<i>Micropus murarius,</i>	MEYER.

*Hirundo*—A Swallow. *Apus*. *Apous*—Without a foot.

THE Swallows seem always considered as visitants to us, and are so spoken of accordingly: it seems to me, however, that this is an erroneous designation; for, although absent from us the greater part of the year, it is with us that they build and inhabit their dwellings; and here they rear their young: it is to other countries that they are visitants; ours is "their own—their native land:" elsewhere they are but sojourners—unsettled excursionists—destitute of a "local habitation." No one who knows the meaning of the word "home," can doubt for a moment here.

The Swift is a native of the greater part, if not the whole, of the continent of Africa, as also of that of Europe. It visits Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Lapland, and Italy, and is known also in Asia Minor and

Madcira; Montagu and Meyer say in America also; but I believe this is not the case.

It is met with in all parts of the United Kingdom; but it seems to be generally thought, and with some reason, that it is less frequent than it used to be. Why it is so, is entirely unknown. In Ireland it is decidedly local. In the Orkney Islands, the Rev. George Low, in his "*Fauna Orcadensis*," mentions that he had once or twice seen specimens. Dr. Baikie and Mr. Heddle, in their "*Natural History of Orkney*," also record that "on the 25th. of July, 1830, a flock of about forty were seen flying south. Another flock appeared in Sanday, on the 27th. of September, in the same year. On the 8th. of July, 1836, Mr. Strang shot one at Fair Isle; and one was caught alive by the same gentleman at Lopness, on the 9th. of June, 1839. During the summer of 1847, a pair were observed flying about St. Magnus' Cathedral, on which most likely they had their nest."

The favourite haunts of Swifts are buildings in towns and villages, church-steeple, fortresses, and castles.

The Swift, migratory like all our Swallows, arrives among us later than the others, namely, not until the beginning of May, and leaves us in the beginning or middle of August. This is the rule; but exceptions to it, as a matter of course, have occurred, do occur, and will occur. Thus, the Rev. Gilbert White, in the year 1781, noticed that one pair of Swifts remained after all the others had, on or about the first of August, taken their departure. In a few days but one bird remained, the female, as imagined; but there is nothing to shew that it was not the male. Whichever it was, it continued feeding its young, which were then discovered, until the twenty-seventh of the month, when

both parent and children disappeared. Mr. Yarrell imagines that the other parent forsook its family for its companions; but in the absence of proof of this, it will be, so far as concerns the bird, a more charitable supposition, and certainly very far from an impossible one, that some reckless shooter cut him or her off.

Mr. J. B. Ellman, of Lewes, saw two on the 29th. of August, 1850. The Rev. J. C. Atkinson saw three or four companies of Swifts near Eyemouth, on the 30th. of August, 1843, "evidently winging their way southwards. The first lot consisted of four or five individuals, the next of twelve or fifteen. One company loitered a little over a field of beans, but none of them remained long in sight. For the most part their line of flight seemed to lie along the edge of the coast; for few of them ranged to any distance, either seaward or inland. On the 31st. one was seen; and on September the 3rd. two or three at a short distance over the sea." F. Wayne, Esq., observed one at Much Wenlock, Shropshire, on the 28th. of August, 1844; and two on the 1st. of September, in the same year. One was seen by Robert Blagden Hale, Esq., M. P., of Alderley, on the 9th. of September, 1839; two by the Rev. W. T. Bree, near Penzance, on the 15th. of September; three young ones by E. W. Dowell, Esq., of Jesus College, Cambridge, on the 25th. of September, 1842, at Salthouse, near Cley, Norfolk; and one by Mr. F. A. Chennell, at St. Anne's Hill, Chertsey, on the 1st. of October, 1844. A pair were observed by Mr. Salmon to feed their young until the 4th. of October. One was seen by the Rev. Mr. Jackson, October 18th., 1836; three near Brighton, on the 29th. of October, 1849; one by Mr. Blackwall, on the 20th. of October, 1815; others by Mr. W. H. White, on the 27th. of October. One in

Perthshire, on the 8th. of November, 1834; and one by the Rev. Mr. Cornish, in Devonshire, on the 27th. of November, 1835. In Ireland, W. Thompson, Esq. observed a number near Belfast, on the 19th. of August, 1840; and on the 20th. of that month in 1832. On the 18th., in 1845, they were as numerous as in June; and on the 22nd. and 23rd. a single bird was seen. In 1833, he saw about twenty on the 30th. In 1848, one or two were observed on the 1st. of September; several about Dunluce Castle on the 4th. of that month, in 1835; and on the 11th. in the following year, three were seen by Mr. Thompson at the seat of Lord Hillsborough, in the county of Down. The arrival of Swifts is sudden and simultaneous, and their departure the same; but they are more than ordinarily noisy for a few days previously. Cold or wet weather soon after their arrival sometimes proves fatal to these birds; perhaps through lack of subsistence in consequence.

The following curious circumstance is recorded by Mr. T. Catchpool, Jun., in the "Zoologist," pages 1499-1500:—Speaking of an excursion for the day, in the end of June, 1835, to Walton on the Naze, on the Essex coast, he says, "Our attention was soon directed to a Common Swift, which had just entered a small crevice: it flew away before we could reach it. But almost directly after, we saw others clinging to slight projections, and settling on the ledges; and so entirely did they appear weakened by the low temperature of the atmosphere, that they allowed themselves to be taken by the hand without the least struggle to escape. In some places they were settled one upon another, four or five deep, and we literally took them up by handfulls—five or six together. So numerous were they, that we could probably have caught some

hundreds; but having secured about thirty in a basket, we carried them home with us in the evening, and having placed them in a warm situation during the night, in the morning they were strong enough to fly away, with the exception of two which had died."

This bird, from the great length of its wings, and the extreme shortness of its legs, finds it difficult to rise from a level place; so that when it alights, it is almost always in some situation from which it can drop at once into the air. It may occasionally be seen adhering to the flat surface of a wall, "the whole length of the toes being straitened by an action not practised by the generality of birds, so as to be opposed to each other in pairs; while the claws are bent beneath, with the points directed inward." In the "Magazine of Natural History," vol. v., page 736, Mr. Couch remarks, "It is not long that Swifts have frequented stations convenient for my observation. At first there were about two pairs; but they have now increased to four or five; and it is singular that, according to my observation, there is always an odd bird." Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, has remarked a like singularity for two successive years at Wolf Hill, near that place. Swifts are sociable birds, but restless, wild, and quarrelsome in the breeding season.

"Handsone is that handsome does," says the proverb, and well and truly does the Swift deserve its name. Equalled in its powers of flight, it may be and is, by some other birds, and exceeded, doubtless, for the moment, by the impetuous dash of the Falcon; but for its size and the unceasing continuation of its evolutions, there must be few that can compete successfully with it. Wonderfully too, does it guide itself in all the mazes of its seemingly headlong course: one has, however,



been known to be killed by being carried inadvertently against a wall. Like the rest of the Swallows, the Swift both drinks and bathes, or rather dashes while on the wing. It skims along the tranquil surface of the lake and river, and wings its way through the liquid air at a great height—the latter in clear and fine weather, the former when the atmosphere is damp and heavy. Rarely indeed do they take rest, except during the short summer night, or some say in the extreme of the “noontide heat,” or in very stormy weather, when they are supposed to shelter in their holes; but Mr. Thompson points out that at such times they have only shifted their quarters to some more suitable hunting-place. They fly until the dusk of the evening, and have been noticed until after nine o’clock. In the morning again they are betimes on the wing.

They never seem to weary, nor do their wings once flag. They are indeed marvellously endowed in this respect, as when, says Bewick, they “are seen in flocks describing an endless series of circles upon circles; sometimes in close ranks, pursuing the direction of a street, and sometimes wheeling round a large edifice, all screaming together; they often glide along without stirring their wings, and on a sudden they move them with frequent and quickly-repeated strokes.” They are gregarious birds, joining in small troops of from half-a-dozen to a score.

The food of the Swift consists entirely of insects of various kinds. Bishop Stanley relates, speaking of the quantity of insects destroyed by Swallows, that from the mouth of a Swift which had been shot, a table-spoonful were extracted. The indigestible part of the food is cast up in pellets.

The note is a harsh scream. Mr. Selby remarks

upon the theory of White of Selborne respecting the note, that it is fanciful, and so it is; but the one he has suggested in lieu of it—that it is the consequence “of irritability excited by the highly electrical state of the atmosphere at such times,” is certainly still more so; for it is uttered in the most opposite kinds of weather: I look upon it as a simple exclamation of enjoyment, “particularly induced,” says Mr. Macgillivray, “by fine weather and an abundance of food.”

The nest is generally placed in holes about steeples of churches, and the old walls of lofty towers, as also under the eaves of cottages and barns, crevices under window-sills, and even in hollow trees; under the arches of bridges, in the sides of cliffs, and of chalk-pits. It is roughly formed of straws, wool, grasses, hair, feathers, and such like materials agglutinated together, picked up with great dexterity while the bird is on the wing, or purloined, so some say, from, or found in the nest of Sparrows, which they appropriate to themselves. It may be that no nest, or next to none is formed, unless the remains of a Sparrow's nest are used. With the Martins, however, the case is exactly opposite: “thou art the robber,” they might say or sing to the Sparrow.

The ordinary number of the eggs is for the most part two, but sometimes three; and J. J. Briggs, Esq. has, in one instance, at Melbourne, in Derbyshire, known four. Speaking of the nest that contained them, he also relates “a pair of Swifts has inhabited a particular hole in a cottage for more than twenty summers.” This is not a solitary instance of four eggs being found in one nest. They are white. The young birds, which are hatched towards the end of June, are sedulously attended to by the parents, while they remain in the nest, but soon this care ceases, being no longer required; and in some

instances the whole family leave this country as soon as ever the young are able to fly well. They generally leave the nest towards the end of July, but sometimes are later, as they remain in it a long time, until able, or nearly able to forage for themselves.

Male; weight, nearly an ounce; length, seven inches or more, even up to eight inches and a half; bill, very short and black; iris, dark brown; head, broad. The whole plumage, which is close set, with the exception of a small patch of greyish white under the chin, is blackish brown, with a tinge of green, light yellow, and purple. The wings, of extraordinary length, expand to the width of eighteen inches; the second quill feather is the longest, the first a little longer than the third. Tail, much forked; the legs, which are covered with short feathers in front, the toes, four in number, and all directed forwards but the innermost, which is the smallest, and reversible, and the claws, which are short, blackish brown.

The female resembles the male. In the young bird the chin is white, the back has some of the feathers tipped with buff white, and the tertiaries the same.

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## ALPINE SWIFT.

## WHITE-BELLIED SWIFT.

*Cypselus alpinus*,

SELBY. JENYNS.

*Cypselus*—A Martlet.      *Alpinus*—Of or belong to alpine places.

THIS Swift is found throughout Europe—in Spain, France, Switzerland, Italy, Sardinia, Malta, Greece, and the Archipelago; it is also believed to be a native of Africa, and probably of Asia Minor. It is considered as excellent for the table.

Several of these birds have been met with of late years in these islands:—One was shot in the beginning of June, 1820, at Kingsgate, in the Isle of Thanet, Kent; a second near Buckenham Church, Norfolk, in the middle of September, 1831; a third was picked up dead near Saffron Walden, in Essex, in July, 1838. Another of these birds, a fourth recorded specimen, flew into a house, through a window, at or near Dover, as I am informed by Edward Cole, Esq., of Ryther, and was captured on the 20th. of August, 1830; a fifth was seen near Cambridge, by E. B. Fitton, Esq., on the 26th. or 27th. of May, 1845. In Ireland, one was killed early in March, 1833, at Rathfarnham, in the county of Dublin; and another was obtained off Cape Clear, at a distance of some miles from land.

Lassitude seems to be a word unknown to the vocab-

ulary of the Swallows. The Alpine Swift, if possible, exceeds the Common Swift in velocity; ceaselessly chasing its prey in the lofty regions of the air, in the more rarefied state of the atmosphere, and lower down in dull weather, and in the evenings. It follows the chase as long as daylight lasts; but, though its flight has been continued in the most rapid manner, and with the most untiring energy throughout the livelong day, and though even for hours after it is dark its voice may be heard in the midst of the aerial gambols in which these birds delight, yet "early to rise" is ever and always still its motto; and at dawn of day he is up, and like Izaak Walton's "Complete Angler," "leaves the sluggard sleeping."

"The Alpine Swifts," says Meyer, "are seldom seen to alight on the ground, and when they do so, the construction of their legs and feet not being adapted for walking and perching, they shuffle along and look very awkward; and the great length of their wings renders it very difficult for them to rise again. But when desiring to retain themselves in a hanging position against a wall or a perpendicular rock, they exhibit great facility in preserving their equilibrium: by means of their strong claws they cling firmly on, and their tails serve them as a rudder or rest, wherewith they balance themselves so as to be enabled to move the upper part of the body in any direction they may require." They are restless and turbulent birds, and, though sociable among themselves, keep aloof, for the most part, even from birds of their own genus.

The note is a constant twitter, and an occasional brief scream, resembling this word in its sound; but is said to be less harsh than that of the Common Swift.

The Alpine Swift builds its nest among high rocks

in mountainous districts, and in holes in the steeples of cathedrals and churches: the old situation is often again resorted to. It is composed of straw, grass, leaves, wool, feathers, and moss, cemented together with gluten, which gives it a varnished appearance. The nest is said to be rather small in reference to the size of the bird; and is adapted in shape to the situation in which it is placed.

The eggs, two, three, four, or five in number, and of an elongated form, are white: they are laid towards the end of May, and are hatched after fourteen days incubation. The young when first able to fly, still follow their parents, by whom they are for some time supplied with food on the wing.

The general plumage of this species is of a very silky texture, and is charged with a fine white dust, which is easily rubbed off. Male; length, about eight inches and a half; bill, black, and rather longer in proportion than that of the Common Swift; iris, blackish brown. Head, on the crown, brown; neck and nape on the sides, brown; chin, throat, and breast, white; there is a dusky band across the upper part of the latter; back, brown. The wings reach two inches beyond the end of the tail; the second quill feather is the longest in the wing, the first feather a little longer than the third—the shafts of all black; greater and lesser wing coverts, primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, brown—the two latter are very short. The tail is forked, and the feathers, which are brown, are very stiff; under tail coverts, brown. The legs are feathered with brown feathers; toes, orange brown; claws, dark brown.

The female differs in no perceptible respect from the male, but is rather smaller in size.



## SPINE-TAILED SWALLOW.

AUSTRALIAN SPINE-TAILED SWALLOW.  
 NEEDLE-TAILED SWALLOW. PIN-TAILED SWALLOW.  
 NEW HOLLAND SWALLOW.

<i>Hirundo caudacuta,</i>	LATHAM.
<i>Chactura Australis,</i>	STEPHENS.
<i>Chactura macroptera,</i>	SWAINSON.

*Hirundo*—A Swallow. *Caudacuta*. *Cauda*—A tail.  
*Acuta*—Sharp.

THIS is the largest of the Swallows yet discovered. It is a native of the eastern and south-eastern part of Australia and Van Dieman's Land. It is believed also to be a native of India.

The only specimen of this bird that has as yet been met with in this country, was shot on the 8th. of July, 1846, in the parish of Great Horkesley, near Colchester, in Essex, by a farmer's son named Peter Coveney. It is certainly a very strange and unaccountable circumstance, how, why, and wherefore this bird should have thus winged its way from so remote a part of the earth, our very Antipodes, to our island.

Mr. Gould observes of this bird that it is so exclusively a tenant of the air that it is rarely seen to perch, and in cloudless weather very seldom approaches sufficiently near the earth to admit of a successful shot. In dull





weather, and late in the evening when "the prey it seeks" has led the way, it follows it at a lower elevation. "Its whole form is especially and beautifully adapted for aerial progression, and, as its lengthened wings would lead us to imagine, its power of flight, both for rapidity and extension, is truly amazing." "Before retiring to roost, which it does immediately after the sun has gone down, the Spine-tailed Swallow may frequently be seen either singly or in pairs sweeping up the gullies, or flying with immense rapidity just above the tops of the trees, their never-tiring wings enabling them to perform their evolutions in the capture of insects, and of sustaining themselves in the air during the entire day without cessation." These birds are supposed to roost at nights in the clefts of rocks and in trees.

Male; length, eight inches; bill, short, broad at the base, and black; iris, hazel: in front of and over the eye is a line of stiff black bristly feathers; forehead, greyish white; crown, and neck on the back, glossy brown, with purple and green reflections; chin, white; throat, white; breast, brown, darkest on the sides, which are spotted with white; back, greyish brown, lightest in the middle. The wings extend three inches beyond the end of the tail; the first and second quill feathers are of nearly equal length, and the longest in the wing; greater wing coverts, dull brown, with purple and green reflections, the innermost feathers being more or less white on the inner web; lesser wing coverts, dull brown, with purple and green reflections; primaries, dull brown, lightest on the inner web; secondaries, the same. Tail above, as the crown; beneath, brown; it is square in shape, the feathers ten in number, and the same colour as the wings; the shaft of each feather projects beyond

the web, forming a series of spines about an eighth of an inch long from the middle feathers, and gradually shortening on the side ones. Upper tail coverts, as the crown; under tail coverts, white; legs, dark brown. The toes, which are dark brown, are placed three before and one behind, the latter rather on the inner side; claws, dark brown.





SWALLOW.

## SWALLOW.

CHIMNEY SWALLOW. COMMON SWALLOW.

RED-FRONTED SWALLOW.

*Hirundo rustica*,

LINNÆUS. PENNANT.

*Hirundo domestica*,

RAY. BRISSON.

*Hirundo*—A Swallow. *Rustica*—Of or belonging to the country.

THE Swallow, so called, is a permanent resident in the tropical parts of the western coast of Africa; but is said to be less numerous there in the rainy season than at other times: it appears also to be a native of Abyssinia, and to dwell there throughout the year. In Europe, it visits the less frigid parts of Siberia, the Crimæa, Denmark, Russia, Sweden, Norway, Lapland, as likewise Italy, and the southern countries. It is also found in Asia Minor; and Temminck includes it among the birds of Japan.

“Although arriving in large flights upon our coasts, they afterwards disperse, and penetrate by degrees further into the country: a few alone at first are seen among us, coursing in their never-ending chase for food: by degrees their numbers thicken, until the air is again peopled by this interesting race.

The Swallow always makes friends among us; its useful and harmless life and social habits attract our notice, and its familiar approaches to our dwellings make



it looked upon as half-domesticated; it lives among us, yet independent, requiring of us nothing but quiet possession of its accustomed nook or chimney. The Swallow is almost as much respected and cherished as the Redbreast himself, and shares with that favoured bird exemption even from the persecutions of village urchins."

The Swallow attaches itself, for the most part, to the habitations of man, and frequents especially such as are in the neighbourhood of water, over which it delights to sweep in search of its food, which there abounds. The eye cannot fail to be attracted and pleased by its graceful flight, and when, in autumn, we first miss the favourite bird, we feel that a blank is made, and that the hey-day of that summer is gone. We are not, however, altogether taken by surprise, as, for some short time previously, we have seen the birds marshalling themselves in large companies for their approaching journey—collecting together at some selected place of rendezvous, flying to and fro, twittering and chirping, as if discussing their route, and arranging all the preliminaries necessary for a lengthened voyage.

Swallows are generally thought to arrive here in the night, but it does not appear certain that this is, at all events always, the case. They have been seen departing in the afternoon in great numbers, "in a continuous line of more than half a mile in length," their families having been of course increased since the previous census. After their arrival they sometimes disappear again, remigrating, as is thought, owing to the weather being unfavourable, or food being scarce in consequence; but it is possible that they may only shift their quarters, in search of a more congenial situation, or a better supply. In the summer, on a change of weather from drought

to rain, numbers will at once appear where none had been seen before.

The Swallow so times its migration as to pass about half the year in this country. The period of its arrival is generally about the 10th. of April; but there is no fixed chronology of the date; for it varies in different seasons—sometimes earlier, sometimes later. Three were seen hawking for insects near Wakefield, Yorkshire, January the 18th., 1837. One was seen near Lewes, Sussex, on the memorable 1st. of April, in 1851; and one near the Eddystone lighthouse on the 4th. of April, 1831. Several at Plymouth, on the 8th. of April, 1849. It has been known as late as the 8th. of May. The time of departure is early in October, and so strong is the migratory instinct, that if the young of the second brood are not sufficiently advanced, they have been known to have been deserted. Some leave, or at least change their quarters, as soon as the middle of August; others about the middle or end of September, which is perhaps the chief time of their departure; and others not until the middle of October. One was seen at Penzance, in Cornwall, on the 30th. of November, 1845; one at Redcar, in Yorkshire, on the 3rd. of December, in the same year, careering over the sea—the day dull and gloomy: one at Goole, in the West Riding, on the 10th. of December, 1843. In 1849, some remained about Plymouth until the 23rd. of October. Others at Springfield, near Temple Balsall, Warwickshire, on the 18th. of November, 1847, as seen by the Rev. W. Bree, of Allesley.

Mr. J. B. Ellman relates, in the year 1848, “On the 13th. of November I saw two young Swallows. On the 14th. the same again. On the 17th. I saw another. On the 18th. the same again. On the 28th. I saw

nine. On the 29th. the same again. These were the last I saw. None of these were our Swallows, which departed long before." This is consistent with what may often be observed, namely, in the words of the Rev. William Bree, that "after the general flight has departed, and not a Swallow is to be seen, a few will often appear again after a considerable interval, later in the season." These doubtless are those which are on their way from some more northern district, in which possibly they may have been themselves detained by their young brood. Mr. Bree proceeds, speaking of the year 1848, "I lost sight of the Swallows on the 5th. of October, on which day I observed a few. Ten days elapsed, and not a Swallow to be seen in this neighbourhood. On the 16th., however, I observed one flit across the window, as I was dressing in the morning; on the 17th. two appeared; and on the 18th., though it was very cold, and snow had fallen in the morning, five or six Swallows, and one House Martin, were to be seen sporting throughout the greater part of the day on the south side of the house, and between the church and the sheltered walk of trees, occasionally perching and sitting in a row on the sill of one of the south attic windows of the house. In this situation they allowed us to approach them through the chamber from behind, the window being closed. They were evidently all of them young birds, which had but recently left the nest, and had as yet had no great experience of the world. They remained with us on the 19th. and 20th., joined, on the latter day, by a second Martin, one of which, however, before evening, was found dead on the sill of the window, having perished probably from cold, to the no small grief of some members of the family, to whom they had become

objects of considerable interest. On the 21st. and 22nd., the party was reduced to one or two Swallows, and one Martin. On the latter day, a little before dark, one of the Swallows permitted itself to be caught by the hand, as it sat on the window sill; and after having been duly caressed, as a matter of course, was soon restored to liberty, and flew briskly away. After the 22nd., we saw no more of our little feathered favourites."

In the same year, 1848, three were observed by Mr. C. R. Bree, at Stowmarket, Suffolk, on the 25th. of October, none having been previously seen since the 1st. of the month. In the year 1836, the "last Swallow" was seen at Tooting, Surrey, by Mr. Edward Blyth, on the 21st. of October. At Skipton, in Craven, Yorkshire, a pair were observed by R. Dyneley Chamberlain, Esq., to remain, after the others had all gone; and on examining into the cause, he found that one of the young birds was detained in the nest by having had its leg entangled in a piece of cord; in a few days after releasing it from which, they all disappeared, having no doubt spent the interval in preparing the young one for its long flight.

In Ireland, William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, mentions two which were seen flying over the bay near that town, on the 30th. of March, 1846; and on the following day, a single bird was observed on each side of its shores. Winter birds were seen at the same time, and a neighbouring mountain "displayed snow in its ravines; proving, as it were, that even two Swallows do not make a summer," One of these birds was observed to remain without a companion for ten days afterwards. On the 6th. of April one was observed between Antrim and Ballymena, but, nevertheless, the main body were

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remarkably late in coming that year. On the 2nd. of April, 1835, one was seen. Mr. Templeton notes his having observed a few on the 30th. and 31st. of October, 1813. On the 14th. of November, 1815, one was repeatedly seen flying about Stranmillis, near Belfast, where also on the 28th. of October, 1819, three appeared after a severe fall of snow, and a good deal of frost. In 1835, a Swallow was observed on the 26th. of October, near that town; one on the 16th. and 17th. of November, 1846; and one on the 28th. of November, 1845. On the 3rd. of November, 1834, Mr. H. Dombrain shot one at sea, near Lambay Island. From the 18th. to the 24th. of December, 1842, a number were seen about the village of Holywood, near Belfast. Mr. Poole saw two in the town of Wexford, on the 5th. of December, 1842; also on the 10th. of November, 1844. One was seen at the end of November, 1847, at Castle Warren, near Cork.

One would suppose, from their ceaseless flight while with us, that the Swallows would never know fatigue; but, nevertheless, they shew unmistakeable signs of being wearied, by alighting on the yards and rigging of ships when in their transit; nevertheless, and it is a most striking proof of the imperative impulse that guides them in their migration, they will not diverge from their pathway over the ocean, to rest on land that may be only a few miles on one side; but "on, on," is, like Marmion's, their motto, and from their bidden course nothing can induce them to swerve aside. They also, at such times, are said to refresh themselves by dropping on the sea, from which they rise with fresh invigoration. Audubon and other writers state this fact.

It was formerly imagined that Swallows passed the winter in a torpid state, submerging themselves in lakes

for this purpose. The following is the scientific 'dictum' of Dr. Johnson:—"Swallows certainly do sleep all the winter. A number of them conglobulate together, by flying round and round, and then all in a heap throwing themselves under water, and lie in the bed of a river;" a very cold bed certainly. Alexander Mal Berger, also says, in a calendar kept at Upsal in 1755; "August 4th.—Birds of passage, after having celebrated their nuptials, now prepare for departing;" and then "September 17.—Swallows go under water." The "Kendal Mercury," in 1837, detailed the circumstance of a person having observed several Swallows emerging from Grasmere Lake, in the spring of that year, in the form of "bell-shaped bubbles," from each of which a Swallow burst forth;" and the editor added, "we give the fact, well authenticated by the parties from whom we received it, in the hope that it may prove an acceptable addition to the data on which naturalists frame their hypotheses."

That the great body of them leave our wintry shores at the annual time of their migration for the sunny south, is unquestionable; but, nevertheless, it appears equally certain that some individuals, more or fewer in number, hybernate with us. Mr. J. B. Ellman records in the "Zoologist," page 2303, some instances of their having been dug out of hollows in banks in the winter; and Mr. Edward Brown Fitton, at page 2590, "tells the tale as it was told to him" of "immense quantities" having been taken out of the cleft of a rock in the cliff near Hastings.

Mr. Selby, on this subject, says as follows:—"Let it be admitted that a few individuals may, at different times, have been found in a half-dead or benumbed state, under the eaves of houses, or in similar places of retreat, (the natural consequence of remaining in

an uncongenial climate,) such will, doubtless, have been young birds of late hatchings, not able to undergo the fatigue of so long a flight, or old birds reduced by sickness and other casualties to a similar condition; and all of which, I should be strongly inclined to believe, die before the expiration of winter. As a proof that the circumstances may happen, I adduce two instances of having found this bird in the months of December and February, both of which individuals appeared to have recently died." This reasoning is, however, defective in all its parts. First, one Swallow does not make a winter. Secondly, if it be granted, as he seems to have done, that these birds had continued in a torpid state up to the end of the year, the continuation of that state would be much more likely than the destruction of it without reason. Thirdly, their being found in this benumbed state is anything but "the natural consequence of remaining in an uncongenial climate." The natural consequence of so doing would be the death of the bird; not its becoming torpid only and remaining so for months; but when this unnatural state is entered upon, universal experience in all other similar cases shews that nothing breaks it off but the genial warmth of the succeeding year. Mr. Selby also adds as another reason, the fact that February is the time of the moult, which he thinks is totally at variance with the idea of this bird going into such a torpid state as has been represented, and sufficient to prove the improbability or impossibility of such an event. But this is somewhat like arguing in a circle; for the difficulty being got over of going into torpidity, and the ordinary course of nature which would require moulting at an otherwise fixed time, being suspended; the suspension or postponement of the latter follows as

a necessary sequence. Before departing, large flocks of Swallows roost together in such places as osier beds, and the brush-wood that fringes some lake or stream, and hence has arisen the notion that they retire under water for the winter.

The following singular circumstance has just been communicated to me by my friend, the Rev. R. P. Alington, as having occurred on the 26th. of September, in the present year, 1851; a day I well remember for the dreadful storm which came on at night, with an unusually sudden change of wind—the cause of most disastrous and numerous shipwrecks on all sides of the island, and noted in my diary as an awful gale. He says “I was dining last week at my brother’s, near Spilsby, when a medical gentleman, Dr. Hunt, who lives at Addlethorpe, below Spilsby, on the bleak marsh near the sea, told me a curious anecdote relative to the severity of the weather on Friday, the 26th. of September, 1851. He said that so intense was the cold on that day, that in the evening he picked up no less than ninety-two Swallows on the ground, young chiefly, completely starved;” (starved, I must here observe, means, in the north of England, perished by cold as well as by hunger.) “They were put into a hamper, and the following morning being mild, they all flew away quite well. William Dodson, Esq., of Claxby, Chairman of the quarter sessions at Louth, being present, followed up the conversation by saying, (in what year I could not make out, as there was a large party, and I had no opportunity of asking questions,) that on an exceedingly cold day, all the Swallows congregated on his window-sills, not singly, but in separate heaps, with their heads all one way, one piled on the other. These balls heaved up and down with



the breathing of the birds, and upon the cessation of the storm, when the outermost ones flew away, the lower ones were found smothered in considerable numbers." Another somewhat similar case is on record in the "Zoologist," page 2604, though without the like fatal result.

A great number of Swallows and Martins were found dead in barns, sheds, and churchyards in various parts of the county of Norfolk, on the 10th. and 11th. of May, 1849, the weather being very cold and boisterous. "No doubt they perished either from the direct effects of the cold, or from the destruction of the insects on which they generally feed."

Swallows have been kept for two or three years by judicious and careful treatment. Bewick records instances of this, as established by Mr. James Pearson, of London, and also by M. Natterer, of Vienna. They may also be tamed, as he shews in an interesting account, furnished to him by the Rev. Walter Trevelyan, of Long Witton, Northumberland.

Mr. Couch, in his "Illustrations of Instinct," mentions "a pair of Swallows which were observed on the wing, engaged in a chattering contest, close to an opening which led into a solitary barn. It was the evident intention of one of them to obtain an entrance, and equally the determination of the other that no admission should be permitted. They flew in various directions about the only aperture, with incessant and angry chattering; but the bird which appeared to be the rightful occupier always maintained his advantage in keeping nearest the opening. When at last nothing that he was able to do or utter seemed capable of repelling the pertinacious intruder, another bird suddenly darted out through the opening, with a double portio:n

of indignation marked in her motions; and without uttering a sound, joined her mate in repelling the foe; after which she again returned to her solitary station within the building." I fancy that I have seen something of the sort, as first related, myself.

"A pair of Swallows," says Bishop Stanley, "no doubt those of the preceding year, on their arriving, found their old nest already occupied by a Sparrow, who kept the poor birds at a distance, by pecking at them with its strong beak, whenever they attempted to dislodge it. Wearied, and hopeless of regaining possession of their own property, they at last hit upon a plan which effectually prevented the intruder from reaping the reward of his roguery. One morning they appeared with a few more Swallows, their mouths distended with a supply of tempered clay, and, by joint labour, in a short time actually plastered up the entrance-hole, thus punishing the Sparrow with imprisonment and death by starvation. This instance of apparent reasoning occurred at a rectory-house in Lancashire; and a similar story is on record near London, of a pair of Swallows calling in the assistance of their neighbours, for the very same purpose." Mr. Jesse records a precisely similar incident as having occurred in regard to a nest built against the window of a house in Merriion Square, Dublin, and remarks upon it, "In this case, there appears to have been not only a reasoning faculty, but the birds must have been possessed of the power of communicating their resentment and their wishes to their friends, without whose aid they could not thus have avenged the injury they had sustained." Again, "A pair of Swallows built their nest under the ledge of a house at Hampton Court. It was no sooner completed, than a couple of Sparrows drove them from

it, notwithstanding that the Swallows kept up a good resistance, and even brought others to assist them. The intruders were left in peaceable possession of the nest, till the two old birds were obliged to quit it to provide food for their young. They had no sooner departed, than several Swallows came and broke down the nest, and I saw the young Sparrows lying dead on the ground. As soon as the nest was demolished, the Swallows began to rebuild it."

Every one must have observed that on a sudden "note of exclamation," given by a single Swallow, the whole flock, which may have been previously congregated on some spot near, on a sudden dash off in a strange and unaccountable manner. "A Swallow, apparently at some height in the air, utters two shrill notes; on hearing which the whole of the flock quit the water, and rise into the air, so as almost to disappear from the sight. After a short time they return to hawk for flies, and touch the surface of the river at exactly the same place they had just before quitted." "On mentioning this circumstance to an observant friend, he informed me that when he was lately at Malvern, he had observed the effect of the two notes I have just described. A large number of Swallows had congregated on the roof of a house at that place. The preceding evening had been cold and somewhat frosty, so that early in the morning the Swallows were so torpid that he caught two or three of them in his hand, as they rested on the roof near the window of the room in which he slept. While they were in this state, he heard two shrill notes from a Swallow, and in an instant the whole of them took wing simultaneously, and having made two or three circuits in the air, disappeared altogether. He fancied that these circuits were preparatory to their migration, but they

were more probably a notice that food was at hand. At all events it seems clear to me, that there is a master or leading Swallow who guides the movements of the rest."

Swallows may often be seen pursuing birds of prey, and on returning from a chase of this kind, "unite in a song, (apparently,) of exultation." Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, records two curious instances, one of them witnessed by himself, of their flying up and down to and from the top of a very tall chimney. "There was a constant stream of birds ascending and descending; their flight had a most singular appearance, from the circumstance of their flying upwards from the ground to the chimney top almost in a vertical line, and coming down in a similar manner. So regular were they in series, and so vertically disposed, as at once to remind me of a rope-ladder up the mast of a ship; really not too extravagant a simile."

"Who has not watched the Swallow on the wing," says Linnæus Martin, "who has not marked its rapid flight; now smoothly skimming along, now executing sudden turns and intricate evolutions with astonishing celerity? If the weather be warm, it dips in the water as it passes along, and emerges, shaking the spray from its burnished plumage, uninterrupted in its career." The Swallow is, like all its compeers, indefatigable in its flight, and is not often seen to alight. It does, however, occasionally settle on the ridge of a roof, or even sometimes on the branch of a tree, or some such elevated spot, from whence you may see it suddenly drop again into the ambient air and renew its course, to chase its prey, or to join with some sportive companion in all the eccentric meanderings of the labyrinth which it ever and anon follows the thread of. "These

birds," says Meyer, "delight the eye by their ever-glancing flight, passing and repassing us with noiseless wing; sometimes dipping their glossy wings into the stream, or sweeping an insect from its surface; then shooting past us quicker than the eye can follow, they turn and wheel, as if delighting to evade our eager sight."

In perching, the Swallow occasionally rests on the ground by choice, roads being thus not unfrequently resorted to, and sometimes the sea-beach; and objects are, though but rarely, picked up. When they alight on trees, they for the most part prefer to alight on withered and dry branches, in preference to flourishing and leafy ones. The young birds do not return to the nest after they have become able to provide for themselves, and appear then to roost in trees. Swallows may often be noticed in a row, or perfect line, on the ground: after hawking for flies, the whole troop will thus settle on the ground, as if to rest themselves:—but why in straight rank? They may also often be seen coursing over the sea, as zealously and regularly as over the land. They fly very late in the evening—until nine o'clock, or after; sometimes till they can be no longer distinguished. During eclipses of the sun they have been observed, in some instances, to disappear, and in some to cease to sing, and retire, as if to roost; while in others, "though the Rooks and Sparrows had gone to bed, thinking it was night, the Swallows continued flying about as usual."

The food of the Swallow consists entirely of insects, and it is in pursuit of these that it is seen soaring far above in the settled days of summer, and, again, suiting itself to the changes in the weather, skimming close above the surface of the lake, or river, or meadow, along the side of a cliff, a hedge, a paling, or a sheltered

avenue of trees. When feeding, it flies with the mouth more or less open, and the capture of an insect is indicated by an audible snap of the bill. It drinks and frequently laves itself while on the wing. The indigestible part of the food is cast up in pellets.

The utterance of the Swallow in the way of song, though neither powerful or varied, is cheerful and pleasant—a pretty warbling, which you like to stop in your walk and listen to. It may be heard very early in the morning, even so soon as from a quarter-past to half-past two, and also very late in the season. Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, has recorded separate instances of his having heard its song on the 2nd. of September, the 10th. of September, and the 13th. of September, in different years.

In the month of May, about a month after the arrival of the bird, the nest is commenced, and, as imported by one of its trivial names, the inside of a chimney is a common selection, and some angle or corner a few feet down is taken advantage of for the support that it affords. The precise situation is frequently resorted to that had been made use of in previous seasons. The nest, which is open at the top, is formed of moist earth, which the bird collects bit by bit in its bill, from the side of a pond or stream, or the middle of a road, as may often be seen: it is moulded into shape, intermixed with straw and grass; and is finally lined with feathers, or such like soft materials.

Bell turrets are often built in, as also the ledge under the roof of a barn, the inside of the arch of a bridge, the shaft of an old mine or well, unused rooms or passages to which access can be gained, even such as a small orifice in a door affords; any projection of a spout, lintel, beam, or rafter that will serve as a but-

tress being built upon,—a ‘coign of vantage:’ gateways, and outhouses of every kind are chosen; and I have known a pair to build under the wooden shed of the station at Hutton-upon-Derwent, near Malton, almost within reach of the hand.

It is curious that in Ireland Mr. Thompson observes that he has never known the Swallow to build in chimneys, which, as before remarked, are so often built in with us. Thus Gilbert White says, in his “Natural History of Selborne,” that “in general with us, this *Hirundo* breeds in chimneys; and loves to haunt those stacks where there is a constant fire, no doubt for the sake of the warmth; not that it can subsist in the immediate shaft where there is a fire, but prefers one adjoining to that of the kitchen, and disregards the perpetual smoke of the funnel, as I have often observed with some degree of wonder.”

Yarrell mentions one which was lodged in the half-open drawer of a table in an unoccupied garret, to which access was obtainable through a broken pane of glass; and in the Museum of the late Sir Ashton Lever, one was preserved which had been attached to the body and wing of a defunct Owl, which had been nailed against a barn. Sir John Trevelyan, Bart. wrote to Bewick, “At Camerton Hall, near Bath, a pair of Swallows built their nest on the upper part of the frame of an old picture over the chimney, coming through a broken pane in the window of the room. They came three years successively, and in all probability would have continued to do so if the room had not been put in repair, which prevented their access to it.” Yarrell mentions the nest of one pair which was built on the bough of a sycamore hanging low over a pond, at the Moat, Penshurst, in Kent, in the summer of 1832. Two sets of eggs were

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laid in it. The first brood was reared, but the second died unfledged.

W. Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, mentions one or two peculiar instances of the nidification of the Swallow, in the neighbourhood of Belfast:—A pair of these birds built their nest in a house, although the door, by which alone they could enter, was locked every evening, and not opened before six o'clock the next morning; so that being early risers they thus lost, for no inconsiderable part of the season, fully three hours every day. A similar fact is mentioned in Captain Cook's "Sketches in Spain," where it is stated that in the southern provinces the Swallows live in the *posadas*, their nests being built on the rafters where they are shut up every night. In the "Northern Whig," a Belfast paper of July the 2nd., 1829, the following paragraph appeared:—"We understand that a pair of Swallows have built their nest in Mr. Getty's school-room, at Randalstown; and, notwithstanding there are above forty scholars daily attending, the birds fearlessly went on with their labour, and now have their young ones out. One of the windows had been for several nights left down, at which time the Swallows found admittance, and after much apparent deliberation commenced their structure, which they carried on chiefly during the hours of the school; and, though they had abundance of time to build, either before the school commenced, or after it was dispersed, yet they always preferred a few hours about noon for their labour, and seemed to do little at any other time. The scholars, much to their credit, gave them as little annoyance as possible, and the window is still kept open."

In a natural state, or rather in a country where suitable structures are wanting, it is probable that rents



and fissures in rocks and caves are always built in.

The Rev. Gilbert White, of Selborne, records the choosing of two odd situations for Swallow's nests; one of them on the handles of a pair of shears which were placed against the wall of an outhouse. Mr. Jesse, too, in his "Gleanings in Natural History," mentions one which he saw built on the knocker of the hall-door of the Rectory house of the Rev. Egerton Bagot, at Pipe Haycs, Warwickshire. He further observes, "The confidence which these birds place in the human race is not a little extraordinary. They not only put themselves, but their offspring in the power of man. I have seen their nests in situations where they were within the reach of ones hand, and where they might have been destroyed in an instant. I have observed them under a door-way, the eaves of a low cottage, against the wall of a tool shed, on the knocker of a door, and the rafter of a much-frequented hay-loft."

Bishop Stanley mentions one which was built in a bracket for holding a lamp in a corner of an open passage, close to the kitchen-door in a nobleman's house, in Scotland, and though the lamp was taken down to be trimmed every day, and lighted every evening, there a Swallow, and it is naturally believed the same Swallow, built her nest for three or four years, quite regardless of the removal or light of the lamp, and the constant passing and repassing of the servants. His Lordship adds, that on the opposite side of the same open court, the great house-bell was hung, under a wooden cover, fastened to the north wall of the house. It was a large bell, and was rung several times a day to call the servants to their meals. Under the wooden cover of this bell, the same Swallow, it is believed, which had formerly built on the bracket for the lamp, built a nest for several years, and

never was in the least disturbed by the ringing of the bell, or the rattling of the rope. A figure is given of the nest, in the form of a cornucopia—both ends affixed to the roof of the cover.

The eggs are usually from four to six in number, white, much speckled over with ash-colour and dark red, or brown and rufous.

Two broods are frequently hatched in the year, the first of which flies in June, and the second the middle or end of August. When the young are fledged, they may often be seen perched in a row on the edge of the chimney-top, pluming themselves, and waiting for, and watching their parents return with food for the supply of their wants. When they have advanced a step to some neighbouring bough or building, they still are dependant on them; and, even when they can fly, are still fed by them in the most dexterous, and almost imperceptible manner on the wing. The old birds supply them with food once in every three minutes, during the greater portion of the day. Think of this, and, in the words of the "Wanderings," a book I love, applied to our present subject, "Spare, O spare the unoffending" Swallow!

The glossy purple of the upper part of the plumage of the Swallow is only to be perceived upon a close inspection, or when you have the advantage of looking down upon the bird as it skims from under some bridge in the light of the sun, or beneath some other such elevation, from whence you have a commanding view of it. Male; length, eight inches and a half or three-quarters; bill, small and black, the ridge elevated, the space between it and the eye, black; iris, dark brown; forehead, chestnut; crown, side of the head, neck, and nape, very dark glossy blue; chin and throat, chestnut,

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below which is a bluish black band, which ends in a straight line across the breast, which is buff white, more or less tinged with brown; back, glossy blue.

The wings, which expand to the width of one foot two inches, and reach to about the middle of the tail, are long and pointed, reaching beyond the end of the second tail feather; the first and second quill feathers are nearly equal in length, but the first rather the longer of the two. Greater and lesser wing coverts, glossy blue; primaries, dull black, with bronze reflections and pale brown edges; secondaries, the same, very short, with slanting tips; tertiaries, glossy blue; greater and lesser under wing coverts, buff white, darker than the breast, and ending on the edge of the wing in a border of black, brown, and white. Tail, very much forked, the outer feather on each side, almost five inches in length, being as long again as the others, and nearly black, with bronze reflections and pale brown edges, with an oblong patch on the inner web beginning near the base, and ending near the end of the second feather, which, as well as the three next feathers, which decrease in length, have each a rounded white patch on the inner web; the two middle feathers are the shortest of the whole, and dull black, without any white on either web. The white spots on the others form a sort of bar when the tail is expanded, but when it is closed they are not apparent—they shine through. Upper tail coverts, glossy blue; under tail coverts, buff white; legs, very short, and, as the toes, slender, and reddish grey; their upper surface is covered with small scales, underneath, the latter are grey; claws, weak, sharp, and almost black. The Swallow moults in January and February.

The female resembles the male in plumage. The brown on the forehead is less extended than in the male; the

black on the upper part of the breast is not so broad; the breast has less of the rufous and buff tinge; the back is not so lustrous, and the outer tail feathers are shorter than in the male bird.

The young are at first thickly covered with grey down. They soon assume the garb of the adult bird, but are without the lustrous tint, and the feathers do not lie so compactly together. Bill, yellow at the corners of the base; iris, brown. There is no chestnut on the forehead; the throat is paler and duller—the black band is but faintly indicated. The outer tail feathers are much shorter, not reaching to their proper length till after the first moult; the legs are reddish black; the toes beneath, grey.

Buff varieties occasionally occur, as well as white ones, and also pied, or black and white; yellowish white, with a faint rufous tinge on the head and chin; and one silver grey one has been met with, with the same red on the head and throat, and one white above, with the chin and breast reddish white. One of a very light fawn-colour; another of a lighter fawn-colour, of various shades, the wings and tail being almost white on the upper surface; another with the body, head, and breast, buff-colour, the wings and tail white. Mr. Thompson says, I have always remarked that in particular seasons, birds are more prone to assume variety in the colour of their plumage, than in others.

While staying last summer, 1851, with my sincerely valued friend and old schoolfellow, the Rev. Henry Hilton, Rector of Milsted, near Sittingbourne, Kent, I noticed, in the course of a walk by Torry Hill, the seat of Mr. Pemberton Leigh; a white bird on the wing, which I at first took to be a Starling, but which proved to be a young Swallow. After two or three unsuccessful

flying shots with an ancient "piece," which might be supposed to be from the same armoury as that from which Robinson Crusoe was supplied, it at last fell from a rail where I aimed at it sitting. I had previously been informed of a brood of White Swallows at this place, and having applied to Mr. Chaffey, of Dodington, near Sittingbourne, for a chronicle of the facts, he obliged me with the following statement:—"In 1849, a pair of Swallows built a nest, and hatched their young in a bakehouse attached to a farm-house, in the parish of Frinsted, in the occupation of a Mr. Filmer. Out of the number of young ones there was a milk-white one, which was shot some time after they had flown, and is now in my collection. In the following year, 1850, a pair, most likely the same, built another nest in the same place, and hatched two white ones, one of which was sent to me; what became of the other I never heard. This year, 1851, a pair again built their nest in the same place, and hatched two white ones, the fate of one of which you, sir, are acquainted with. They had ingress and egress through a broken pane of glass. The bakehouse was constantly used for baking and other purposes, of which the old birds took little or no notice."





PURPLE MARTIN.

## PURPLE MARTIN.

## AMERICAN PURPLE MARTIN.

*Hirundo purpurea*,

WILSON. AUDUBON.

*Hirundo*—A Swallow.*Purpurea*—Purple—purple-coloured.

THIS Swallow appears to hold the place in America that our own does with us. Wilson says, "I never met with more than one man who disliked the Martins, and would not permit them to settle about his house. This was a penurious, close-fisted German, who hated them because he said they 'eat his peas.' I told him he must certainly be mistaken, as I never knew an instance of Martins eating peas; but he replied with coolness that he had many times seen them himself 'blaying near the hife, and going schnip, schnap;' by which I understood that it was his 'bees' that had been the sufferers; and the charge could not be denied."

It is a sociable and half-domesticated bird; and it would appear that in America it is the custom to encourage these Martins to frequent the neighbourhood of farm-steads, as they are supposed, or rather indeed known to be useful in driving off birds of prey. They are the terror of Eagles, Hawks, and Crows; which at their first appearance they assail so vigorously, that they are instantly compelled to have recourse to flight. Poultry, as soon as they hear the voice of the Martin engaged in fight, instinctively know what is the matter, and



exhibit alarm and consternation. The King-bird is in like manner attacked, but if a common enemy appears, he is united with in repelling such. Wilson relates an anecdote communicated to him by the late John Joseph Henry, Esq., Judge of the supreme court of Pennsylvania, of the place put up by him for the reception of the Martins having been forestalled by Blue-birds. The latter succeeded in repelling the former, and kept possession of their abode, and this for eight successive years; the Martins always attempting to obtain a footing, but being as uniformly forced to give up the attempt.

The following specimens of the Purple Martin have been met with in this country:—Two were shot on different days by Mr. John Calvert, of Paddington, the first week in September, 1842, at the reservoir, Kingsbury, Middlesex. One was a young bird of the year, the outside tail feathers not being grown to their full length, the other was an old male in full plumage.

In Ireland, one was shot near Kingstown, in the county of Dublin, and is now preserved in the Museum of the Royal Dublin Society.

The Purple Martin, as may be imagined, is migratory in its habits, arriving at the scene of its parental duties in May, being to be observed on the way thither at various half-way houses in February, March, and April, and leaving again about the 20th. of August. 'Unde datum sentit;' whence it is gifted to know, the time when, in pursuance of the not-to-be-resisted mandate of nature, it must set out on its travels, and, in obedience to the like dictate, the time when it must again return by the same route by which it went forth on its long journey, is hidden in the unfathomable mind of that Divine Being whose thoughts are past finding out; "His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts than

our thoughts." How, too, does the Swallow know the place to which it must wend its way; and how does it track the trackless path to it?

Insects are the food of the Purple Martin, and of these, bees constitute an ordinary portion, as also wasps, and even beetles of large size.

"Just as dawn approaches, the Martin begins its notes, which last half a minute or more, and then subside until the twilight is fairly broken. An animated and incessant musical chattering now ensues, sufficient to arouse the most sleepy person." The usual note is described as resembling the syllables, 'peuo, peuo, peuo,' frequently succeeded by others more low and guttural.

"The summer residence of this agreeable bird," says Wilson, "is universally among the habitations of man; who, having no interest in his destruction, and deriving considerable advantage, as well as amusement, from his company, is generally his friend and protector. Wherever he comes, he finds some hospitable retreat fitted up for his accommodation, and that of his young, either in the projecting wooden cornice on the top of the roof, or sign-post, in the box appropriated to the Blue-bird, or, if all these be wanting, in the dove-house among the Pigeons. In the latter case, he sometimes takes possession of one quarter or tier of the premises, in which not a Pigeon dare for a moment set its foot." Some persons, he further observes, have regular places fitted up beforehand for the reception of their visitors, to which it is noted that the same individuals return from year to year. Even the solitary Indians of the Chickasaw and Chactaw tribes have a fondness for this bird, and shew it by lopping the boughs off a sapling tree by their wigwam door, on which they hang an empty gourd or calabash prepared thus for it to build in. The

Negroes also, on the banks of the Mississippi, place the like on the tops of long canes, which they put in the ground for the same purpose.

Nidification commences in April or May, according as the place halted at is farther or otherwise on the "great north road." The nest is made of leaves, hay, straw, and feathers in considerable quantity.

The eggs are about four in number, small for the size of the bird, and pure white without any spots. The first brood appears in May, the second late in July. Both the male and the female bird assist in the work of incubation; the former relieving, and attending on the latter with much careful tenderness.

Male; length, eight inches; bill, strong; iris, full and dark; head, crown, neck, nape, chin, throat, breast, and back, deep purple blue, with reflections of violet-colour. The wings expand to the width of one foot four inches; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, brownish black. The tail consists of twelve brownish black feathers; it is considerably forked, and edged with purple blue; legs, short, strong, and dark dull purple.

Female; bill, strong; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, blackish brown, with blue and violet reflections thinly scattered; chin, throat, and breast, greyish brown, the latter darker under the wings, and tinged below with dusky and yellow.

The young bird is six inches and three-quarters in length; bill, black; head, crown, neck, nape, chin, throat, breast, and back, shining purple blue. Greater and lesser wing coverts, tinged with blue; primaries, edged with brown; legs and toes, blackish brown.





MARTIN.

## MARTIN.

HOUSE MARTIN. MARTIN SWALLOW. WINDOW MARTIN.

*Hirundo urbica*,

PENNANT. MONTAGU.

*Hirundo*—A Swallow.*Urbica*—*urbs*—A city.

- “Would I a house for happiness erect,  
Nature alone should be the architect.”

So says the poet Cowley, and those who are wise will say the same, and will build after her model, and on the foundation she lays, so far as is consistent with the duties of life.

The pretty chirruping of the Martin over your window is the pleasantest alarum to wake you up to enjoy the “dewy breath of incense-breathing morn,” and both the associations of earliest recollection and the adventitious aids of poetry combine to invest it with a never-failing charm. So again, at night, when the parent bird has returned to her brood, for whom she has toiled all the day, and takes them under the shelter of her wings; what more pleasant sound is there in nature than the gentle twittering of the “happy family”—the unmistakable expression of the veriest and most complacent satisfaction!

The Martin is an attendant on civilization, and endeavours to establish itself about the habitations of man. It cannot be called a native of Africa, being born elsewhere; but it visits us and other countries from

thence. It frequents Lapland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, and even Siberia, Iceland, and the Ferroe Isles.

The trite remark of Cervantes "*una golondrina no hace verano*;" "one Swallow does not make a summer," is as true of this species as of all the rest. There is, in fact, hardly a month, nay, there is hardly a day in the winter half of the year, on which, on one occasion or another, a Martin has not been seen, either a late arrival, or a late tarrying, or one roused up from the lethargic slumber of torpid hybernation, in which it would appear that, in some instances at least, these birds are wrapped. The average time of the arrival of the Martin is about the 21st. of April—a few days later than the Swallow; but, as already pointed out in the case of that species, after they have made their first appearance, they often disappear for weeks, and again shew themselves, and then remain through the summer. About the middle of October they generally depart in large flocks, having first congregated on house-tops, church-towers and roofs, and even on trees. They are often, however, much later in leaving us. White of Selborne saw a small flock on the 3rd. of November. A flock of more than one hundred were seen at Dover, on the 13th. of November, 1831. Montagu saw several at Kingsbridge, in Devonshire, until the 15th. of November, 1805. A flight of more than two hundred were seen at Barnstaple, on the 17th. of November, 1838; and the Rev. W. F. Cornish saw one near Sidmouth, on the 10th. of December, 1835.

"Timid as they appear to be," says Bishop Stanley, "when occasion calls for exertion and courage, they can not only fight a good battle, but manifest a good deal of generalship. A pair of Martins having built in a

corner of a window, one of which, from a remarkable white feather in one of its wings, was known to be the same bird which had built there the year before, had no sooner finished their nest, than a strange Swallow conceived the plan of taking possession of the property, and once or twice actually succeeded in driving the owners out. For a week there was a constant battling; at length the two rightful owners were observed to be very busily engaged in lessening the entrance into the nest, which in a short time was so reduced, that it was with difficulty they could force themselves into it singly. When they had accomplished their object, one or other of them always remained within, with its bill sticking out, ready to receive any sudden attack. The enemy persevered for a week, but at length, finding its prospects hopeless, left the pair to enjoy the fruits of their forethought."

The following curious circumstance, originally communicated to me by Mr. George B. Clarke, of Woburn, Bedfordshire, has been recorded in "The Naturalist," vol. i., pages 23-24:—"In the summer of 1849, a pair of Martins built their nest in an archway at the stables of Woburn Abbey, Beds., and as soon as they had completed building it, and had lined it, a Sparrow took possession of it, and although the Martins tried several times to eject him, they were unsuccessful; but they, nothing daunted, leaving him in full possession, flew off to scour the neighbourhood for help, and returned in a short space of time with about thirty or forty Martins, who dragged the unfortunate culprit out, took him to the grass-plot opposite, called 'the circle,' and there all fell on him, and killed him. This was related to me by an eye-witness, a day or two after the occurrence took place."



So also, in the "Zoologist," page 2605, Mr. J. J. Briggs relates, "In the year 1846, a pair of House Martins built their nest beneath one of the windows of our house, and had just made it ready for the reception of eggs, when two Sparrows took possession of it, and defied all the efforts of the rightful owners to force them out. During the absence of the Sparrows one day, the Swallows blocked up the entrance, and finally built another nest over it, and so excluded the usurpers." Also, "in 1836, I was an eye-witness to an interesting circumstance, which illustrated the natural affection of this bird. During the third week in October, a pair of Martins built a nest underneath the battlements of one of the public buildings in Derby, in a warm and sheltered situation. At the end of the month, the main body of Martins departed, leaving this pair behind, which continued in the neighbourhood until the extraordinarily late period of November 27th., when the young being fledged, left the nest, and they and their parents disappeared together. This appeared to me extraordinary, as I have known more than one instance in which the old birds have forsaken their offspring to obey the migratory impulse: sometimes, if a nest is examined immediately after the departure of a pair of these birds, the young will be found half-fledged, and evidently having died from starvation, occasioned by the parents abandoning them."

The flight of the Martin is powerful and rapid, but often wavering and unsteady.

Its food consists of insects.

Its note is a lively twitter, often elevated, especially early in the morning, into an extremely pleasing warble.

The Martin rears two broods in the year, and sometimes lays a third or even a fourth time, though the

last brood cannot be attended to before they themselves leave. White of Selborne says that they are never without young ones in the nest as late as Michaelmas; for as soon as one brood is able to fly, the hen bird begins to lay again, but the latter clutch is smaller in number than the former one. Those which are unfortunately unable to fly when the "moving power" seizes their parents, are left behind, speedily to perish, as has repeatedly been discovered. When only two broods are produced, the first nest is commenced about the 25th. of May, and the young leave the nest about the 2nd. of August. The second nest is begun about the 11th. of August, and the second brood quit it about the 29th. of September.

The same nest is resorted to from year to year. Thus the Rev. Gilbert White says:—"July 6th., 1783, some young Martins came out of the nest over the garden door. This nest was built in 1777, and has been used ever since." The young birds of one year often add another the following to "the row" of nests which ornament the eaves where their parents have built, and sometimes the birds will form a continuous line of the mud they build with along the wall, without any apparent or discernible motive, for there it remains without any use being made of it. The mud they use in building is tempered and cemented in some way or other, for it will adhere firmly even to glass.

The nest, which is generally built under the eaves of a house, but also frequently on the sides of cliffs, is of an hemispheric form, and is lined inside with a little hay and feathers.

The eggs are four or five in number, smooth and white. Incubation lasts thirteen days. At first the parent birds enter the nest each time to feed the young

ones, but by and by the latter may be seen anticipating their arrival by thrusting out their heads at the door of their house, in expectation of the meal which they there receive; the old bird holding on to the nest outside, in the attitude depicted in the plate.

Male; length, a little over five inches and a quarter. Bill, short and black; iris, brown; head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, glossy blue black; chin, throat, and breast, white; back, glossy blue black. The wings reach to the end of the tail; the first quill feather is the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, glossy blue black; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dull black. Tail, dull black and forked; upper tail coverts, white; legs and toes, small, and covered with short white downy feathers; claws, curved, sharp, and of a greyish horn-colour.

The female resembles the male, but the colour is not so bright, and the white on the chin and throat is less pure.

The young resemble the female.

White varieties are sometimes obtained; one has been shot with the middle feather of the tail white.





## SAND MARTIN.

## BANK MARTIN.

*Hirundo riparia*,

PENNANT. MONTAGU.

*Hirundo*—A Swallow.      *Riparia*—Of or belonging to banks.*Ripa*—A bank.

THIS diminutive species of Swallow makes its way from Africa, along the whole of which continent it is believed to be found, to its northern summer haunts; and advances to all the south of Europe, and as far as Siberia, Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. It is said to be resident in Malta all the year round. In India also and America it is met with.

It is somewhat local in its distribution with us; in fact, according to the localities themselves, so is its frequentation of them.

In Ireland it occurs, though not so plentifully as the others of its race. In Scotland also. In the Orkney Islands these birds were formerly more numerous than they are at present. They frequent Skaill, Sanday, and the Loch of Stenness. They also visit Shetland.

Sand banks, especially in the neighbourhood of water, are the favourite resort of this species.

The Sand Martin, though one would think that the wild winds would retard the progress of so tiny a traveller, arrives here rather before the others of its congeners. On the 24th. of March, 1847, W. F. W

Bird, Esq. has known it at Kidderminster, in Worcestershire. Near Penzance more than a dozen were seen by Edward Hearle Redd, Esq., on the 29th. of March, 1847. In two different seasons, it has been noticed even so far north as Carlisle, as Mr. Heysham has recorded, before the end of March. In Cumberland it has been observed on the 4th. and the 11th. of April. In the Orkney Islands it arrives in May. In the month of August it departs.

In favourite situations, the holes that these birds have bored may be seen in great numbers, and close to each other. Two broods in the year are sometimes reared, the first being able to forage for themselves in about a fortnight; and when the first batch of young have left the nest, they roost in numbers in such places as osier beds in small islands, on the banks of rivers, and other suitable resting-places. The second brood is not unfrequently forsaken by its parents, who find the call, "away, away," too strong to be resisted, and even natural affection gives way to its all-powerful command. Both parents feed the young as long as is necessary: they all return at night to sleep in the nest. They are sociable birds, as evinced by the great number of their tenements that are to be seen in the immediate vicinity of each other. In some instances, however, single pairs have been known to build by themselves, and in others only small numbers.

Their flight is rapid, flickering, and unsteady. When searching for food, they may be seen skimming low over meadows and commons; and, like the other Swallows, they often drop upon the water as they fly, to drink, or to lave themselves.

The food of this species consists, like that of the rest of their genus, of insects, and these are frequently

dashed at on the water. The young are fed with the same, sometimes of large size.

The nest of the Sand Martin, as intended by its name, is placed in the straight banks of rivers, cliffs of the sea-shore, sand-pits, and such other like situations as are sufficiently soft for the bird to perforate—not always at a high elevation—I have known them almost within reach of the hand from the beach. It hollows out for itself a way to its intended resting-place to the depth of from two to three, and even nearly four feet. The work is performed with its bill, which it keeps closed for the operation, swaying itself round as occasion requires on its feet as a pivot. It begins at the centre and works outwards, and hence the former is more deeply penetrated than the latter. The gallery, which tends upwards, is more or less tortuous; the entrance is from two to two inches and a half wide, and is widest at the inner end, where a little hay or wool, or a few small feathers are placed, on which the eggs are laid; the loose sand having all been lightly removed from the surface, as the bird has worked on, with its feet. These “excavators” complete their work, though they are such “feeble folk,” in about a fortnight. The same hole is resorted to from year to year, or, if it has fallen away, another is hollowed out in the same neighbourhood. The weight of sand mined in a day is from sixteen to twenty ounces, and pebbles of even more than two ounces in weight have been known to be removed.

The eggs are from four to six in number, and white. They are very tender, and are hatched after an incubation of twelve or thirteen days.

Male; length, four inches and three-quarters: Meyer says from five and a quarter to five and a half; bill,



dark brown, or nearly black, and very small and weak; iris, dark brown; head, crown, neck, and nape, light brown; chin, throat, and breast, white, the latter having a band of light brown, with a few spots of the same below it, across its upper part, and light brown also on the sides; back, light brown. The wings reach beyond the end of the tail, and expand one foot in width; the first feather is the longest, the others gradually shortening in succession; greater and lesser wing coverts, brown; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dark brown, almost blackish, underneath lighter; greater and lesser under wing coverts, light brown. Tail, forked, dark brown, almost blackish, underneath it is lighter; upper tail coverts, lighter brown than the back; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, dark reddish black or brown, and scaled; there are a few buff white feathers just above the junction of the hind toe to the leg; claws, dark brown.

In summer the plumage loses its gloss.

The female closely resembles the male.

The young birds have the chin buff white, the throat dashed with brown and rufous, and often spotted with grey, and the feathers of the head, back, wing coverts, and tertiaries, tipped with the same buff white. This is sometimes separated from the ground colour by a darker band; the legs are paler than in the adult, and without the tuft of feathers behind the hind toe.

Varieties have occasionally occurred—white, and yellowish white.





## PIED WAGTAIL.

WATER WAGTAIL. WHITE WAGTAIL.  
 BLACK-AND-WHITE WAGTAIL. WINTER WAGTAIL.  
 PEGGY-WASH-DISH. DISH-WASHER.

<i>Motacilla Yarrellii</i> ,	GOULD. MACGILLIVRAY.
<i>Motacilla alba</i> ,	LINNEÆUS. LATHAM.
<i>Motacilla lotor</i> ,	RENNIE.

*Motacilla*—A Wagtail. *Yarrellii*—Of Yarrell.

ONE is often led to wonder, and doubtless the same remark would apply to other lands, how the most trivial names of antiquity keep their place in the vocabulary of the country; while modern inventions last but for the day, or for the hour, and are then consigned for ever to the "tomb of all the Capulets." One may soon be lost in speculation as to the time when each of such old names was first assigned, and who it was that gave it; what combination of circumstances first procured for it the honour of the durability which bids fair to be perpetual; and through what succession of changes it has been maintained. These considerations make us smile at the vain conceits of some of our modern self-styled naturalists. Do they really think, dogmatically as they may lay down the law to their own entire satisfaction, that their whimsical combinations will ever be adopted by the people of the country—that the old will

be displaced to make room for the new? They are fondly mistaken if they entertain the notion. The name of the favourite and elegant little bird before us—no case of '*lucus a non lucendo*'—will ever remain one of the 'old standards:' no 'weak invention' will ever supersede it in the idiom of the nation. The Wagtail will always continue a Wagtail, not only in nature, but also in name.

Two species are now believed to have been hitherto included under one; that which is the commoner in this country, being comparatively rarer on the continent; the other being here the more unfrequent. At different seasons of the year, too, the one before us appears in two such different dresses, that it might naturally be supposed to be anything but identical at each time with itself.

This bird is stated by Mr. Gould, to have been only procured by him from Norway, Sweden, and the British Islands.

The sides of rivers, and of lakes, of pools, streams, and mill-dams, and the shores of the sea, both among sand and pebbles, are the more natural haunts of the Pied Wagtail; but they are frequently to be seen on the grass and walks in our gardens, coming up often to the kitchen door; and they also frequent ploughed fields and meadows. To the former watery situations they resort in numbers, when the early education of their family has been completed.

In February these birds pair, and early in March begin their migratory movement: then they arrive from the continent: many at least of them, not all, for some have remained, and some still remain in the south, while others advance northwards, even to the extremest boreal shores of Scotland. They leave the cold north for

more southerly districts before the winter; and about the middle of August they again begin to move southwards to the sea coast. There, at the end of that month, or the beginning of September, they move in an easterly direction; and towards the middle of October many of them again wing their way elsewhere; but a considerable number remain. In severe weather they approach more nearly to houses and farm-yards, and may then be seen quietly meandering along, flitting up, if disturbed, to the house top, and occasionally, though but rarely, alighting on trees. Their movements appear to be rather uncertain, but after a periodical absence, they again return—sometimes unexpected, but at all times welcome visitors.

The Pied Wagtail is a very elegant bird, and it is truly a pleasing sight to watch it nimbly running or lightly treading on the most treacherous sands, in quest of its food, ever and anon flirting up its tail, which, indeed, is always rather elevated, as if to keep its neatness unsoiled. Occasionally you may see it wading ankle deep in the water; now perching on a little stone; now flying off on a sudden to join some neighbouring troop of companions, whose companionship it greets with a shrill though gentle twitter; now springing into the air to capture a fly; now threading its way among a herd of cattle, or a flock of domestic birds; still almost heedlessly awaiting your near approach. If disturbed, it springs up with a sharp but delicate note of alarm, and after a few aerial bounds frequently alights again, but sometimes goes right away.

The parent bird is extremely solicitous for the safety of her young, and will almost suffer herself to be taken off the nest sooner than forsake them. If she does fly off, it is only to a short distance, and immediately the

danger has past she is back to her post. The young continue with their parents during the summer and autumn, the difference in their respective plumage pointing each out at a glance.

The flight of this bird is light and undulated, but unsteady. It rises and falls alternately, renewing the motion of its wings at the pause of each descent.

Its food is chiefly composed of insects; and these, as Mr. Macgillivray well describes, are sought in various diverse localities. Actively and dexterously the bird steps among rocks and stones, and then pitching on the top of one, instantly vibrates its tail, as if poising itself. Again it makes an aerial sally, flutters about a little, seizes an insect or two, then glides over the ground, swerving to either side, and resumes its attitude of momentary pause. Sometimes it essays an excursion over the water, one while darting forwards in a straight line, then hovering in the same spot, to seize some prey; and then, as if fatigued with the unwonted effort, it makes a sudden detour, and betakes itself to some offering place of rest. At times it may be seen running along the ridge of the top of a house, and every now and then capturing a fly. It has been asserted that it also feeds on minnows, the small fry of fish, and on minute shell-fish.

The note is a sharp cheep, which it repeats frequently when alarmed, flying about in a wavering manner. It sometimes aspires to a pleasant modulation, which may almost be dignified with the name of a song.

The nest is commenced in the beginning or middle of April, according to the season. It is plac'd in situations of very opposite kinds—in a hole of a stone wall, the side of a bridge, in a hollow of a tree, on a heap of stones, the bank of a streamlet or river, the side of

a stack of hay, peat, or wood, a stony or grassy bank, a mud wall, or on the grass. Meyer has known one in the middle of a turnip field. It is about five inches wide externally, by about three and a half internally, and composed of stems of grass, leaves, small roots, and moss, lined with wool, hair, thistle down, or feathers, and any other such soft substances, all somewhat rudely, or rather loosely put together. Mr. Weir sent Mr. Macgillivray an account of a pair of these birds which built their nest in an old wall, within a few yards of four men, who, during the most part of the day, were working at a quarry, where they were occasionally blasting the limestone with gunpowder. There the female laid and hatched four eggs. She and the male became so familiar with the workmen that they flew in and out without shewing the least signs of fear; but if he himself approached, so quickly did they recognise a stranger, they immediately flew off, and would not return until he had removed at least five or six hundred yards from their abode. Also in May, 1837, another pair built their nest under the platform at the top of a coal-pit, which was jarred against every time that the coals were drawn up. They became quite familiar with the colliers and other persons connected with the works, flying in and out only a few feet off them, without shewing the least symptoms of fear. The nest was built within a few inches of where one of the men used to stand. Mr. Jesse mentions another pair which built their nest in a workshop occupied by braziers, and, though the noise was loud and incessant, there they securely hatched their young.

The eggs, five or six in number, and of an elongated oval form, are light grey, or greyish or bluish white, sometimes tinged with yellowish or greenish, spotted all



over with grey and brown. They vary, however, very considerably both in size and colour, some being much larger than others, some much more deeply coloured, and some most spotted at the thicker end, in the form of a zone or belt.

The young are hatched after an incubation of a fortnight; a second brood is generally reared in the year, the former one having been produced early.

Male; length, seven inches and a half to seven and three-quarters; bill, deep black; iris, dusky black; there is a narrow space of white over it. Short bristles occur at the base of the upper bill; forehead, white; side of the head, white; back of the head on the crown, deep black, with a glossy blue tinge in summer; neck, above in front, white, as is a band on each side in summer; on its lower part is a semicircular band of black, narrowing upwards towards the base of the bill. In the spring the interval is filled up with black. Nape, deep black; chin, throat, and breast, white, the sides tinged with grey; back, above, in summer deep glossy bluish black; on the middle, greyish black, with a tinge of green in some individuals, becoming darker as the season from spring to summer advances, but still generally tinged with grey, though in some specimens it is entirely black.

The wings extend to the width of eleven inches and a half or one foot, and reach to within two inches and a half of the end of the tail; the second quill feather is the longest, the first longer than the third, but all nearly equal. Yarrell describes the first as the longest. Greater wing coverts, greyish black, margined with greyish white; lesser wing coverts, greyish or brownish black, their edges and tips white in summer, the extreme edge grey; both forming two bars of white on the wing;

primaries, greyish black, some of them margined on the inner web with greyish white in summer; secondaries, the same, the white edge wider, and tinged with grey; tertiaries, one of which is very long, the same, the edge still wider, but less in summer. The tail, which is very long, and composed of twelve narrow feathers, rounded at the ends, and of nearly equal length, is black, the eight middle feathers black; the outside feather is usually white, with a narrow black wedge-shaped band along the inner edge, excepting towards the end; the next also is white, with the inner black band more extended—the base of both black; the third has a narrow margin of white; the middle pair are the widest at the base, but much narrower towards the tip. Upper tail coverts, which are very long, deep black, with a glossy blue tinge in summer; under tail coverts, white. Legs, toes, and claws, deep black, the hind claw rather short.

The female resembles the male. Length, seven inches and a half; the crescent on the fore part of the neck is not so large, and in the summer it is tinged with grey. The breast is greyish white; the back has more grey, especially in summer. The wings expand to the width of ten inches and three-quarters, or from that to eleven and a quarter; the quill feathers are dusky; the tail has the two middle feathers brownish black.

In the young the bill is dusky, the edges partly yellowish. There is a narrow light grey or yellowish white streak over the front of the forehead; head behind and crown, grey, darker than the back; neck, in the front and on the sides, greyish white. The throat has a dusky line down each side, forming a curved band in the front; the white of the breast is obscured with grey and yellowish brown, and the crescent is but obscurely indicated; sides, light grey; the back is dull

grey, in some specimens tinged with green. Greater and lesser wing coverts, blackish brown, edged with greyish white, making two bands; primaries and secondaries, larger and lesser under wing coverts, greyish brown, tipped with whitish. The tail has the middle feathers blackish brown, the rest darker, the two side ones nearly all white; upper tail coverts, grey, darker than the back. Legs and toes, brownish; the feathers on the former are greyish brown, edged with whitish.

After the autumnal moult the colours become more distinct; the head is still grey, the crescent on the breast is black, and the back is grey as the head.

A. E. Knox, Esq. says, "These birds moult soon, having completed the change at the end of July, or early in August. The black feathers gradually disappear from the throat in both sexes, and the dorsal plumage becomes of a lighter colour in each; the back of the male assuming the grey of the female during the breeding season; while that of the female, and the young of the year in both sexes, changes to a very light grey. Indeed, between the two latter, there is no external difference of appearance." This moult is completed at various periods, from the end of August to the end of October; the difference being, doubtless, the consequence of there having been one, or two broods. In the spring there is another moult, which commences in February, and is completed by the middle of April. The throat first changes, then the head, back of the neck, sides, back, and breast, in succession; but the quill feathers of the wing and of the tail are not changed.

Albino individuals have been met with, and there is often some yellow on the lower part of the breast.

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WHITE WAGTAIL.

## WHITE WAGTAIL.

## GREY AND WHITE WAGTAIL.

*Motacilla alba*,  
*Motacilla Brissoni*,

LINNÆUS. GMELIN.  
 MACGILLIVRAY.

*Motacilla*—A Wagtail.    *Alba*—White.

As stated in the previous article, these two supposed species of Wagtail have only lately been considered as such; having been previously, and, as is thought, erroneously, combined under one. I will not pass a decided opinion upon the subject—the imagined differences will appear in the specific description; but I must observe that some degree of uncertainty even still prevails. Thus Mr. Macgillivray, usually so scrupulously accurate in treating of the present bird, quotes Mr. Gould as saying that it, the Linnæan one, has never yet been discovered in any part of England, yet Mr. Macgillivray is himself describing it as a sufficiently plentiful species at the time; and then, nevertheless, after so saying, he gives his own description from continental specimens. So again, Mr. Yarrell says that “although” believing the birds to be distinct, he gives figures and descriptions of “both;” and then follows, with the figure of the Pied Wagtail, one of the Continental White Wagtail, which, he says, he has very little doubt “will be” occasionally found in this country.

All this seems like "confusion worse confounded;" and I cannot with truth profess to be able to see my way very clearly. In the last edition however, he gives it. The Prince of Musignano considers that two distinct species exist.

This bird is found over the whole of the continent of Europe, taking there the place, as regards numbers, which the Pied Wagtail holds with us; the latter being the less common species there, as the former is here. It is plentiful from Iceland, Sweden, and Norway, to Malta and Sicily, Crete and Corfu; and is also a native of Asia and of Africa.

Like its predecessor, this species is to be met with almost everywhere at times—on the open moor and in the well-cultivated garden; by the side of the rapid mountain stream and the slow and sluggish river; the shore of the boundless ocean, and the estuaries which lead to and from it. Arable and pasture land, if indeed the herbage of the latter be short, are both alike to it; the gravel walk and the well-kept lawn, the village street, and even that of the larger town, the farm-yard pond, and the running rill of the most sequestered dell.

In autumn they migrate, the young accompanying their parents in their travels, seeking the warmer countries for their winter sojourn, after having enlivened the colder districts in the summer.

These Wagtails may frequently be seen in summer time bathing and washing themselves upon some shallow shore. They also, like the other kind, delight at times in running along the tops of houses, walls, and buildings, and perch on stacks of wood, and piles of stones; doubtless they "find good in everything." At night they roost among branches of low trees, as also among reeds and various kinds of brushwood; and are said to

collect together for the purpose in considerable numbers, and with some degree of clamour. They are ever active and restless by day, and would seem to have discovered the great secret of "perpetual motion." They run along the ground with a quickness whose steps the eye cannot follow, and this from morning to night, with but very few intervals of equivocal rest. Their heads too, as well as their tails, are in motion, their legs and their whole bodies. Often they may be seen chasing each other in some fitful humour, and again uniting with aliens in attempting to repel some common foe. One of these birds has been noticed by M. Julian Deby to come for a month to a window, knocking itself against the pane of glass. Another similar instance has been recorded by James Cornish, Esq., of Black Hall, Devonshire. A Wagtail came in the like way to his window, and after some days it was opened to let him in; he became very tame, and used to alight even on the dressing-glass, which he took apparent pleasure in inspecting himself in: his mate would not venture inside the window. In June he disappeared, but returned again for a short time, after an absence of a few weeks. The next year a pair, of which he probably was one, came again to the window, but did not advance any further.

Its food consists of insects and their larvæ, and as these are procured, as may be gathered from the previous remarks, in every variety of situation, they are doubtless of as great variety of kinds. Many a "scarce article" that would be a prize in the entomological cabinet, goes unheeded into the indiscriminating pouch of the insectivorous bird.

The nest is generally placed in a hole of a bank or of a tree, higher or lower indifferently; sometimes under



the caves of a thatched house, or between the timbers of a roof, among felled wood, the roots that the earth may have fallen away from, a meadow, under a bridge, or in a heap of stones. Both birds assist in its formation, bringing together for the purpose small twigs and sticks, moss, grass, straws, leaves, and roots, and lining the whole with wool and hair.

The eggs, which have little or no natural polish on them, and are four or five, six or seven in number, are bluish white in colour, speckled all over with minute grey specks, and spotted with larger spots of brown, principally at the larger end; occasionally in the way of an irregular belt.

Male; length, seven inches and a quarter; bill, black; iris, black; forehead and sides of the head, white; crown, black; neck on the sides, white; part of the nape, black; chin and throat, black, but not extending back to that of the nape, a white space being left between the two, which runs into the grey of the back; in the winter it becomes white, a crescent only of black being left on the breast. Breast, white, light grey on the sides; back, pale grey. The wings have the first, second, and third feathers nearly equal in length, the second rather the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, black, edged with white; primaries, black, narrowly edged with white; tertiaries, black, rather more edged with white. The tail, which is very long, and the feathers narrow, has the eight middle ones black, the two outer ones white with a black stripe along the inner margin, and a small portion of the base also black: the end is rounded; upper tail coverts, black; under tail coverts, white; legs, toes, and claws, black.

The female has less black on the head; the forehead is dull white; the crescent on the throat is dusky grey,

and in the summer it spreads up to the under bill. The greater and lesser wing coverts are grey; the primaries and secondaries tinged with brown. The tail is tinged with brown.

The young are at first covered with black down; the bill reddish brown, its corners yellow; the legs reddish brown; afterwards a greyish brown or grey crescent spreads on the throat, the back is light brownish grey, the wings brownish black, the tail the same.

Varieties have been met with, either totally or partially white.

## GREY WAGTAIL.

WINTER WAGTAIL. YELLOW WAGTAIL.

<i>Motacilla sulphurea</i> ,	BECHSTEIN.
<i>Motacilla cinerea</i> ,	RAY.
<i>Motacilla boarula</i> ,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Motacilla melanopa</i> ,	GMELIN.

*Motacilla*—A Wagtail. *Sulphurea*—Sulphureous—sulphur-coloured.

THIS is one of the most elegant of our native birds, and on this account, as well as for its comparative infrequency, “always a welcome guest.”

It is a perennial denizen of the southern part of Europe, being found in Switzerland, Italy, France, and Spain; also in Madeira. It likewise inhabits Java, Sumatra, Japan, and other parts of India.

In this country it is generally diffused, being found all over England and Scotland, though rarely in the extreme north. It is unknown in the outer Hebrides. In the Orkney Islands it is occasionally seen in the summer.

The sides of small streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds, are more peculiarly affected by this species.

The Grey Wagtail is said to migrate southwards in the winter, and northwards in the spring, the former movement being made in September, and the latter in April; but some certainly do not leave Yorkshire, for I have seen them here this winter, a pair on the 5th. of this present January, 1852; and another a month ago in



GREY WAGTAIL.



very severe weather; a few are also seen about Edinburgh in the winter. Some in like manner remain in the south in the breeding season. They probably move into more retired situations to breed, and are then supposed to have migrated.

They are solitary birds, a pair being the number ordinarily seen together. Instances have been known of their coming to windows like the other species, but whether to look at themselves as in what in Yorkshire is called a "seeing glass," or for some other reason, is a matter about which we are in entire ignorance. In severe weather they naturally become more tame than at other times: one has been known, of all places, to enter a museum.

The flight of this Wagtail exhibits the same airy lightness that characterizes the rest of its family. On a sudden it bounds away in an undulating sweep, if alarmed, to a distance, but otherwise, probably, it soon drops again: then it runs with rapid steps along the margin of the "glassy, clear, translucent lake," as "fair" in the eye of the ornithologist, as "Sabrina" herself, or glides on the bank of the winding river, the still pool, or the running brook; into which at times it wades, or alights on some extant weeds, or bank of apparently treacherous mud, or quicksand, on which its light feet scarce leave a faint impression. On first alighting, the side feathers of the tail are conspicuously expanded. These birds, like the others, are fond of running along the ridge of a house top, probably in pursuit or quest of insects. They perch occasionally on trees, especially when first alarmed.

Their food consists of insects and minute shell-fish. The former they capture both by running and flying after them.

tinged with green. The quill feathers of the wings are dusky black, and are crossed by a grey bar formed by the coverts; upper tail coverts, greenish yellow; under tail coverts, pale yellow; legs and toes, yellowish brown; claws, light brown.

After the first autumnal moult the adult plumage is assumed.







## GREY-HEADED WAGTAIL.

BLUE-HEADED WAGTAIL. YELLOW WAGTAIL.

<i>Motacilla neglecta</i> ,	GOULD. JENYNS.
<i>Budytes flava</i> ,	PRINCE OF MUSIGNANO.
<i>Motacilla flava</i> ,	LINNÆUS. TEMMINCK.

*Motacilla*—A Wagtail. *Neglecta*—Neglected.

THE Grey-headed Wagtail is plentiful throughout the central parts of Europe—Germany, France, and Holland; and is found also in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Lapland, and other countries. It occurs likewise in Asia, in India, among the Himalaya mountains, and in Japan, and also in Africa.

It was discriminated from our common yellow one by Mr. Gould, and since then it has occurred in several instances. A pair were shot by John Gatcombe, Esq., of Wyndham Place, Plymouth, as he has informed me, in a large marsh at Laira, near that town, May 1st., 1850; and to him I am very much indebted for excellent coloured drawings of both specimens; from one of which the plate is taken. In May, 1848, several were procured, and many more seen, as Edward Hearle Rodd, Esq. has recorded, in the neighbourhood of Penzance and Marazion, in Cornwall; one was killed near Melbourne, in Derbyshire, November 23rd., 1846. A pair were also shot at Dover, near the harbour, in July, 1851, which Mr. Chaffey, of Dodington, has written me word of.

One was shot by Mr. Henry Doubleday, of Epping, in October, 1834, on Walton cliff, near Colchester, Essex; another was seen at the same time. On the 2nd. of May, 1836, another, a male bird in adult plumage, was shot by Mr. Hoy, in the parish of Stoke Nayland, Suffolk. One of a pair which were seen was shot in the same month of the same year, near Newcastle, in Northumberland; and another, also a male, was taken in April, 1837, near Finsbury, London.

In Scotland, one was met with near Leith, and another near Edinburgh.

It is a migratory bird, like the others of its clan, and arrives here about the middle of April, departing again in September, though some remain until October.

This species seems, if report speaks true, to frequent small streams of water more than the Yellow Wagtail, but it also resorts to meadows, downs, and fields.

The gait of the Grey-headed Wagtail is alike in graceful activity to that of the rest of its congeners, and when it alights, the same fanning motion of the tail bespeaks its family name. It runs with great rapidity, and perches on trees, but it seems much the most at home on 'terra firma,' and to be rather insecure when perched; its feet being more adapted for walking and running than for holding on to a branch.

Its food consists of insects of various kinds, and their larvæ, and doubtless any "unconsidered trifles" that are catable.

The note is said to be sharper than that of the Yellow Wagtail.

The nest is generally placed on the ground in holes or hollows, especially in marshy or moist places, and among the projecting roots of trees; also, it is said, in fields and meadows. It is formed of grass, moss, or

heath, lined with finer portions of the former materials and hair.

The eggs are about six in number, whitish in colour, mottled nearly all over with yellowish brown and grey.

Male; length, six inches and a half; bill, black: a white band, composed in fact of two, extends from it over the eye, and a dark one to the eye; iris, dusky brown; head, on the crown, bluish grey. The neck has a white band on the sides, and on the back it is, as is the nape, bluish grey; chin, white; throat and breast, bright yellow, almost white, or pale primrose-colour in autumn. Back, yellowish green, tinged with brown, the latter colour being on the centre of each feather, and the yellowish fading out in autumn.

The wings extend to within an inch and three-quarters of the end of the tail; greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky brown, margined with yellowish white; of the primaries, the first is scarcely longer than the second, the third a little shorter; they and the secondaries and tertiaries are dusky brown, margined with yellowish white. The tail is very long, and slightly rounded at the end; the middle feathers are nearly black, edged with greenish yellow, the two outer ones white, excepting an oblique nearly black band, widest in the second, extending for half-an-inch from the end over part of the outer web and the greater portion of the inner web; the next with a narrow outer edge of white; upper tail coverts, yellowish green, tinged with brown, the former fading out in autumn. Legs and toes, brownish black, and not so slender as in some of the family; claws, black.

In the female the length is nearly six inches and a quarter; the bill is brownish black; iris, dusky brown—over it

runs a white streak; head and crown, grey, duller than in the male, mixed with greenish brown in the autumn. The neck in front, yellowish white, with some brown feathers; on the back and the nape, the grey is duller; chin, white; throat, yellowish or buff white; breast, pale yellow; back, greyish brown. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky brown, nearly white on the edges; under tail coverts, yellow. Legs and toes, brownish black.

The young male, in his first plumage in autumn, resembles the female, except that the grey on the head is more mixed with brown, and afterwards with green; chin, yellow. The yellow on the breast is clouded with brown and buff orange.

The young female has the chin and throat buff white; the breast mottled with brown above, and on the lower part pale yellow, as are the under tail coverts.

One has been seen pure white.





## YELLOW WAGTAIL.

## RAY'S WAGTAIL.

<i>Motacilla flava,</i>	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Budytes Rayi,</i>	PRINCE OF MUSIGNANO. MEYER.

*Motacilla*—A Wagtail.      *Flava*—Yellow.

THIS is a common species with us in summer, but most so in the southern and midland counties. It is not numerous either in Ireland or Scotland. In the Orkneys it has been observed several times. One was shot near Kirkwall, by Mr. Ranken, in the autumn of 1845; and another was seen near the same place on the 25th. of September, 1847.

Water courses, water meadows, and such like localities, are the choice of the Yellow Wagtail; but it also, like the others of the genus to which it belongs, frequents at times, and even more than they do, very dissimilar places, such as open downs and pastures, ploughed fields, and various other situations. On their first arrival I have often noticed them in numbers in fields that had been flooded, the saturation of moisture doubtless, bringing many insects within reach. They have been observed perching on the stems of plants in quest of these. They not unfrequently appear on the lawns in front of houses.

The Yellow Wagtail migrates hither in summer, and leaves us again in time to avoid the hyemal blasts, which



those which stay behind must feel. It arrives about the end of March, or the beginning or middle of April, and leaves the north of the kingdom for the south, about the middle of August or September.

These birds will occasionally pursue insects on the wing, somewhat after the manner of the Flycatchers. They are of a gentle and affectionate disposition among themselves, and are generally seen in pairs, but in the autumn in small families—the parents and their offspring.

The sylph-like motions which distinguish the rest of its tribe, belong equally to the species before us, as well as the vibration of its body, and the expansion of the feathers of the tail, especially on first alighting. Its flight is extremely graceful—a series of lengthened undulations.

Its food consists of insects, and these it seeks both on the “high and dry” upland, and in moist and low situations.

Its note, which is a double one, is rather shrill.

The nest is placed on the ground, or near it on the stump of a tree, and is compacted of dry stalks and fibres, and lined with hair. Meyer describes one made of moss, with a few tufts of grass outside, and a few horse-hairs within.

The eggs, four or five or six in number, are pale brown, or greenish white, sprinkled all over with a darker shade, in some very obscurely, of grey, or pale rufous or yellowish brown; some specimens are nearly plain dull yellow, slightly marbled over; these are said to be smaller in size. They are of a rather long oval form. The young birds are able to fly about the end of May.

Male; length, six inches and three-quarters; bill, black; iris, dark brown, over it is a line of yellow;

forehead, yellow; sides of the head, crown, neck, and nape behind, yellow, with a tinge of greyish green; chin, throat, and breast, rich yellow; back, pale greenish brown, the middle part of the feathers being brown, and their margins yellowish green.

The wings expand to the width of ten inches and a half; the first three quill feathers are of nearly equal length, the second the longest, the first nearly as long: Yarrell describes the first as the longest; probably different specimens vary in this respect, as already shewn in the case of Montagu's Harrier. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky brown, the first row tipped with pale yellow; primaries, dusky brown, edged with dull yellowish white; secondaries, dusky brown, edged with yellowish white; tertiaries, dusky brown, edged and tipped with yellowish white; greater and lesser under wing coverts, greyish. The tail is long, and slightly rounded, its feathers narrow, dusky in colour, slightly edged near the base with yellow, the middle feathers edged with greenish yellow, the two outer ones on each side nearly white on the outer web and the shaft, and half of the inner web, with a streak of black on the inner web; tail coverts yellowish green. Legs, toes, and claws, black, very slender, the hinder one long, and nearly straight.

In the female the length is six inches and three-quarters; bill, brownish black; iris, dark brown; the line over it is yellowish white. Head, on the crown, light greyish brown, tinged with green. The breast is paler than in the male; back, darker brown than in the male, below greenish, as in the male. The wings expand to the width of ten inches; toes, brownish black.

## RICHARD'S PIPIT.

*Anthus Ricardi*, FLEMING. BEWICK. SELBY.

*Anthus*—Some small bird. *Ricardi*—Of Richard.

THIS is a rare bird, a veritable 'rara avis,' even in Europe, which is the only quarter of the globe in which it has hitherto been discovered; its native home is probably, however, elsewhere. A few specimens have been met with in Italy, Greece, France, Germany, Spain, the island of Crete, and Austria, in which last-named country it is the most frequent.

In our own country one was taken alive near London, in the month of October, 1812; two others occurred, also near London, in the spring of 1836; and another has been procured since; a fifth was taken near Oxford. One was shot near Howick, in Northumberland, on the 13th. of February, 1832, by Mr. W. Proctor, curator of the museum of the University of Durham. Another, as recorded by William Richard Fisher, Esq., of Yarmouth, was killed near there on the 22nd. of November, 1841; another in the following April, and another on the Denes, between that town and Caistor, by the same person who had previously killed one, and who remarked its peculiar appearance. Two were shot near Penzance, in Cornwall, and two near Marazion, in that county, and one near Newcastle, in Northumberland.

In addition to these, John Gatcombe Esq., of Wyndham Place, Plymouth, who has most obligingly furnished me with a highly-finished coloured drawing of the bird, from





which the plate is taken, has written me word that, in the neighbourhood of that town, one was shot by himself in the month of November, 1842. He has also informed me that three others were procured at the same time, and two more a few years afterwards.

In Ireland and Scotland it has not occurred up to the present time.

Richard's Pipit appears to be partial to dry rocky situations. It seldom alights in trees, being addicted to the ground, where it finds its sustenance.

Its food consists of insects of various kinds.

The note is said to be very loud, and to be uttered frequently by the bird when on the wing.

The eggs are described as being of a reddish white ground colour, speckled with darker red and light brown.

This bird seems to vary much in size, different individuals measuring respectively, six inches and three-quarters, seven inches and a quarter, seven and more than a half, and eight inches in length. The upper bill is dark brown, the lower one paler in colour, with a tinge of purple: two dark lines proceed from its base; one of them, which is made up of small spots, losing itself in the spots of the breast; the other ends near the ear coverts. Iris, very dark brown, nearly black—a light streak passes over it; head, on the sides, reddish brown; on the crown, neck behind, and nape, brown in the middle of the feather, with a tinge of green, the edges being lighter yellowish brown; chin, dull white. Throat and breast, dull white, tinged on the upper part and the sides, and also the sides of the neck with yellowish brown, and the latter inclining to rufous in some specimens, and spotted with dark brown. Back, as the nape.

The wings, which are rather short, have the first four feathers very nearly equal in length, the first being slightly the longest, and the others gradually diminishing from it; the fifth is a quarter of an inch shorter than the fourth. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dark brown, buff white on the edge of the feathers; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dark brown, bordered with rust-colour. The tail has the outer feather on each side dull white, with an elongated patch of brown at the base of the inner web; the next feather on each side is also dull white on part of the web, but less extensively; the three next feathers are very dark brown; the two middle ones shorter than the rest, their colour a lighter brown, and their edges also paler; upper tail coverts, as the nape; under tail coverts, as the breast. Legs, toes, and claws, light brown, with a tinge of yellowish pink; the hind claw is very long, and not much curved.

The female has less of the rufous tinge than the male.







## MEADOW PIPIT.

TITLARK. PIPIT LARK. TITLING. MEADOW  
TITLING. MOSS CHEEPER. LING BIRD. GREY CHEEPER.  
MEADOW LARK.

<i>Anthus pratensis</i> ,	FLEMING. LATHAM. SELBY. GOULD.
<i>Alauda pratensis</i> ,	PENNANT. LATHAM.
<i>Alauda trivialis</i> ,	MONTAGU.
<i>Alauda campestris</i>	LATHAM.

*Anthus*—Some small bird. *Pratensis*—Of, or pertaining to meadows.

THE Titlark is a native of the three continents of the old world—Europe, Asia, and Africa. It occurs throughout the whole of the first-named quarter of the globe, ascending as high in the “scale of nations,” as the Ferroc Islands and Iceland, the Orkneys and Shetland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and even beyond the Arctic circle; in all the more temperate regions also—Holland, Dalmatia, and Sicily; and in the latter, in Egypt, Asia Minor, and Japan; and doubtless in numberless other regions. It is a very common and well-known species with us—one of our “hardy perennials;” also in Ireland and Scotland the same.

Meadows and marshland, hill and dale, waste and wilderness, moorland and heath, arable and pasture land, all are the home of the sober-clad little bird before us, but especially the wilder districts. It is found on the summits of our highest mountains, and

in the lowest depths of the plain below. I have observed them in hard weather to frequent much the neighbourhood of the sea, searching and finding among the heaps of sea-weed, "food convenient for them;" and indeed at all times the sandy places that are to be met with along the line of coast, are a favourite resort of theirs. Occasionally they may be seen in the streets of towns, driven thither by stress of weather.

The late Bishop Stanley in his truly-named "Familiar History of Birds," mentions the fact of one of these little birds having alighted on board a vessel, in the midst of the Atlantic ocean, thirteen hundred miles from the nearest part of America, and about nine hundred from the wild and barren island of Georgia. They move in a southerly direction in the autumn, to avoid severe weather.

This is one of the many different kinds of birds which feign being wounded, in order to entice away apparent intruders from their young, in whose safety, and even in that of the nest and eggs, they display the greatest interest. At times they may be seen wading into the water, and washing themselves with much apparent satisfaction. They are alert and nimble in all their movements, "watchful and wary." They are easily tamed.

Their flight is but short and unequal, that of a very homely bird of passage. They have some more immediate object in view in their movements, than to cross the ocean and visit a far distant clime. In the days of summer they hover occasionally over or about their nest, singing the while, and now and then settle on a low bush, or a rail, alighting with a sweep, or sometimes almost perpendicularly; but their mother earth is their more natural resort, and from thence "their sober

wishes seldom learn to stray." Akin to the Wagtails, this species frequently oscillates its tail when standing on some mound of earth, or stone, or other eminence, especially on first settling, and generally perches and roosts on the ground.

The food of the Titlark consists of insects, worms, small slugs, and shells—of course with their contents. These it searches for on the ground.

Its song, which is soft and musical, though with little variety, is uttered on the wing, when watching about its nest, and also, occasionally, when perched. It is commenced generally about the middle of April, but has been known earlier, not unfrequently in March, and on one occasion so soon as the 4th. of February: it lasts till July. The ordinary note is a gentle "peep;" from whence, probably, the name of Pipit; and, when alarmed, a 'trit, trit.'

The nest is placed either on or close to the ground, often in marshy places, among grass, near a tuft, on the branch of a very low bush, a bank, or a wall of turf. It is composed of grass, the finer portions constituting the lining, with occasionally a little moss and hair. One has been known to be built on the end of a plank, which formed part of a heap of timber.

The eggs are from four to six in number, of a light reddish brown, or reddish white, or pale brown, or pale blue colour, mottled over, especially near the larger end, with darker brown. They vary much in depth of colouring, some being much darker than others; hardly any two sets are exactly alike in this respect.

The eggs are laid about the middle of April, and the young are abroad by the end of May. A second brood is often produced about the middle of July.

Male; weight, between four and five drachms; the

length varies from six inches and about a half, to six and three-quarters; bill, dusky, excepting on the edge of the upper and the base of the lower, which incline to pale yellow brown: a line of dusky spots extends from it down the side of the neck; another stretches over it; iris, dark brown. Head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, brown, the middle of the feathers being darker, and the edges much lighter: after the autumnal moult the whole assumes a tinge of rich olive; chin, throat, and sides of the neck, pale yellowish, brownish, or rufous white; breast, light rufous white, spotted with dark brown; below, dull white, tinged with brown, the whole ground-colour attaining a yellowish tint after the autumnal moult; back, as the nape.

The wings expand to the width of from ten inches to ten and three-quarters: the first four feathers are nearly equal in length, the first is the most pointed, some say that it is the longest, but it is the third that is so; greater and lesser wing coverts, brown, broadly edged with light brown; primaries, brownish black, narrowly bordered with light brown, changing seasonally to olive, and at other times to ash-colour: the outer one has a white edge; secondaries and tertiaries, brownish black, edged with light brown, changing in the same way in the autumn, and at other times occasionally to ash-colour. The tail is nearly two inches and a half in length; the two middle feathers shorter than the others, and dark brown, lighter towards the edge; the outer one on each side dull white, or very light brown on the outer web, with a small patch of brown on the broad inner web; the next on each side is dark brown, with a small patch of white at the tip of the inner web; the other six feathers are blackish brown, with olive-coloured edges in the season; the

upper tail coverts, brown or olive, are long, covering more than half of the tail. Legs and toes, light brownish yellow; claws, dusky, darker in age; the hind one is slender, slightly curved, and is as long as the toe: its tip is light-coloured, and almost transparent.

The female closely resembles the male, but is rather smaller. Length, from five inches and three-quarters to six inches. The wings expand to the width of from nine inches and a half to ten inches.

The young birds of the first year have the olive and yellow tint assumed in autumn by their parents.

There is, at all events in some individuals, a partial moult in the spring, in March or April, owing possibly to their accidental loss of feathers, or the state of their health.

Mr. W. Thompson, of Belfast, describes a beautiful variety of this species as follows:—The crown of the head, beautiful rich primrose yellow, which colour also broadly edged the white feathers of the back, and those of the upper surface of the wings and tail. The throat and under side of the neck were pure white. One wing was very handsome, the four first quills being pure white, the next four of the usual dark colour, and the remainder pure white. One half of the tail feathers were wholly white, excepting the margins, which were broadly edged with primrose yellow. The lower part of the breast, and a few odd feathers here and there were of the ordinary colour. The bill and legs were paler in hue than usual.

## RED-THROATED PIPIT.

## RED-BREASTED PIPIT.

<i>Anthus montanus</i> ,	KOCK.
<i>Anthus Ludovicianus</i> ,	BONAPARTE. LICHTENSTEIN.
“ “	AUDUBON.
<i>Anthus spinoletta</i> ,	BONAPARTE.
<i>Anthus aquaticus</i> ,	BECHSTEIN. TEMMINCK. MEYER.
“ “	RICHARDSON. SWAINSON.
<i>Alauda Pensylvanica</i> ,	BRISSON.
<i>Alauda spinoletta</i> ,	LINNÆUS
<i>Alauda campestris spinoletta</i> ,	GMELIN.
<i>Alauda campestris</i> ,	LATHAM.
<i>Alauda Ludoviciana</i> ,	LATHAM. GMELIN.
<i>Alauda rufa</i> ,	WILSON.
<i>Alauda rubra</i> ,	LATHAM. GMELIN.

*Anthus*—Some small bird. *Montanus*—Of, or appertaining to mountains.

I HAVE much satisfaction in giving for the first time, a figure of this bird as a British one. Robert Gray, Esq., of Southcroft, Govan, Glasgow, has written me word of its occurrence in the neighbourhood of Dunbar: two specimens were procured by himself, and one by a friend of his in a garden there; two others were obtained in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, in May, 1824; and two others, it is thought, in the same year. W. F. W. Bird, Esq. has also rendered very valuable assistance, by a careful and accurate translation from Temminck, who,







though he not only in his first volume, but in his third, which is an appendix to the first, and also in his fourth, had treated two species as one, yet, in the second part of the fourth volume, published in 1840, having fully satisfied himself that they were really distinct, described them accordingly. Mr. Macgillivray has given a useful account of it in his "Manual of British Ornithology," the first record, that I am aware of, of this species as a British one.

This species inhabits principally the south and east of Europe. It is also found in the American and Asiatic Continents; also in Japan.

The habits of this species are myotherine, that is, allied to those of the Flycatchers, its food consisting of insects, both of land and water, and their larvæ. These are the '*spolia opima*' of it and its allied species.

The nest is built in mountainous regions, and the neighbourhood of water seems to be preferred, but not the sea coast.

The eggs are four or five in number, and of a dull grey colour, covered all over with faint brown spots, more or less confluent.

Male; length, from rather more than six inches to six and a half; bill, brownish black; from its base a yellowish white line extends over the eye; head, on the crown, ash-coloured brown, the centre of each feather darker than the edges, more or less distinctly according to the season of the year. Neck, whitish in the front, on the sides and lower part streaked with brown; in the spring it is tinged with rose-coloured red; chin, throat, and breast, yellowish grey, tinged in the spring with roseate red; the latter spotted and streaked more or less, especially on the sides, with greyish brown. The streaks decrease with the advance of spring, and in

some specimens are totally obliterated; afterwards they again appear. Back, greyish brown, with a slight tinge of olive; the centre of each feather being of a darker shade, and those on the lower part greenish.

The wings expand to the width of eleven inches and three-quarters; greater wing coverts, brown; lesser wing coverts, brown, edged with greenish yellow, and some of them tipped with brownish grey. Primaries, brown, edged with greyish white; the four first are almost equal, but the first the longest, the fourth the shortest; secondaries, brown, edged with greenish yellow. The tail, which is rather long, has the two middle feathers ash-coloured brown, the rest blackish brown; the outside feather on each side has a long oblique white patch on the inner web, and the greater part of the outer web is white; the next is similarly marked, but not so extensively, and is tipped with greyish white. Legs, toes, and claws, brownish black, with a tinge of purple.

The female is more spotted on the breast. The side tail feathers are more tinged with grey.

In the young the bill is lighter, and the line over the eye is not so broad as in the adult bird. The spots on the breast are larger and more confluent; legs, toes, and claws, lighter than in the old bird.





## TREE PIPIT.

PIPIT LARK. FIELD TITLING. FIELD  
LARK. LESSER FIELD LARK. TREE LARK. GRASSHOPPER  
LARK. LESSER CRESTED LARK. MEADOW LARK.  
SHORT-HEELED FIELD LARK.

<i>Anthus arboreus</i> ,	SELBY. JENYNS.
<i>Anthus minor</i> ,	BEWICK.
<i>Alauda trivialis</i> ,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Alauda minor</i> ,	LATHAM.

*Anthus*—Some small bird.      *Arboreus*—Of, or pertaining to  
trees.

THE Tree Pipit is found throughout the European continent—in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, plentifully in France and Italy, the forests of Thuringia, and in Switzerland, and also in Madeira. It probably winters in Africa, and is found in Asia—in Japan.

It is rather a common species with us, but principally in the southern counties. In Cornwall, however, it is said to be rare, and also rather so in Wales.

In Ireland it is not certainly known to occur. In Orkney it is an occasional visitant. It is said by Clouston to have occurred in Sanday.

Wooded districts in the cultivated parts of the country are its resort, and if you

“Know a bank whereon the wild thyme grows;  
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows;”

There, if there are trees hard by, you will very probably meet with the Tree Pipit "in the season of the year."

This species is a migratory one. It appears in England about the 20th. of April, and in Scotland in the beginning of May, and departs again in September; sometimes a little earlier. The males arrive a week or ten days before the females.

It is solitary in its habits, and not gregarious like its kindred species just described.

The Tree Pipit will be seen to ascend upwards on quivering wings a short distance from the spray on which it has been perched, and having attained the moderate elevation to which it had aspired, it again descends, with outstretched wings and expanded tail, slowly, and with a sweep, to the same or some neighbouring spot. Over and over again is the evolution gone through by the happy little bird, which thus doubtless gives vent to the exuberance of its feelings. It rarely alights on the ground without having first halted on a tree, as a sort of "half-way house," which it, in like manner, makes its "Traveller's rest," when leaving the ground for the short flight that it may intend.

Its food consists of flies, caterpillars, grasshoppers, and worms, and also small seeds.

Like "Annie Laurie's," its "voice is low and sweet," a pretty little song, warbled while perched on the branch of a tree, or occasionally on the ground; and also, and most frequently, while descending to it in the manner already described. It begins in the spring and continues till July. It is but a monosyllabic effusion, with therefore hardly any variety—a 'tsee, tsee, tsee,' often repeated.

The nest is placed on the ground, in woods and

plantations, under the shelter or secrecy of some small bush, or tuft of herbage, or perchance on the branch of some low bush, if close to the ground. It is formed of small roots and grass, with occasionally a little moss, and is lined with a few hairs. It measures about three inches across, and about an inch in thickness of construction.

The eggs are four or five in number, and are generally greyish white in colour, with a faint tinge of purple, clouded and spotted with purple brown, or purple red. They vary almost 'ad infinitum,' more so, it is said, than those of any other land bird. Some are dull bluish white, spotted with purple brown; others reddish white, entirely covered with specks of deep red; others reddish white, clouded with pale purple grey, and finely streaked and spotted with rust black; others again pale purple red, minutely marked in a net-like manner with a darker red.

Male; weight, about five drachms and three-quarters; length, about six inches and a quarter to six inches and a half; bill, dark brown, all the base of the lower mandible and the edges of the upper one yellow brown. It is rather flattened out at the base, and a brown streak passes backwards and downwards from it. Iris, deep brown, over it is a whitish band: there are a few short bristly feathers at the base of the bill; head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, olive greyish brown, the centre of each feather being darker than the edge; chin and throat, pale brownish white or brownish yellow on its sides, with a tinge of rufous in the spring, as is the breast in front, on which are numerous small spots of dark brown; on the sides the spots turn into streaks, and are darker: the ground colour of the sides is olive brown, and



below it is pale brown, tinged with dull white: the autumnal moult, which takes place in August, gives them a yellowish rufous tint; back, as the nape: with the autumnal moult all the upper parts assume a greenish olive tint.

The wings expand to the width of eleven inches and a quarter, and reach to within an inch and a quarter of the tip of the tail; greater wing coverts, dark brown, broadly edged with pale brown or greyish white, most apparently after the autumnal moult; lesser wing coverts, blackish brown, edged and tipped with pale brown or buff greyish white, the light-coloured ends of both forming bars across the wing, most distinctly after the moult; primaries, dark brown; the first is the longest, but all the first three are nearly equal in length, the second very nearly as long as the first, and the third as the second; secondaries, dark brown, more broadly edged with a paler tint; tertiaries, dark brown, long, also with a broad outer edge of pale brown. The tail, which is rather long, has the outside feather on each side brown; the narrow outer web, and part of the inner one, in a wedge shape, dull white tinged with brown; the next feather is also brown, with only a small patch of dull white at the end of the inner web; all the other feathers blackish brown, edged with lighter, except the two middle ones, which are greyish brown, having lighter margins than the rest; upper tail coverts, olive grey brown, without the dark markings on the centre of the feathers. Legs and toes, pale yellowish brown or grey; claws, pale dusky brown, the hind claw considerably curved, and shorter than the hind toe.

The female resembles the male in plumage, but she is rather less in size. Length, a little over six inches.

The spots on the breast are not so well defined. The wings expand to the width of eleven inches.

The young birds at first have the bill paler in colour than the old birds; the breast with more yellow; the spots on the front of the neck narrower; the back more tinged with green, and the dark marks darker, the margins light greyish yellow; the two outside tail feathers greyish white on the inner web, and the outside one pale brownish grey on the outer web. The legs, toes, and claws, very light brown.

below it is pale brown, tinged with dull white: the autumnal moult, which takes place in August, gives them a yellowish rufous tint; back, as the nape: with the autumnal moult all the upper parts assume a greenish olive tint.

The wings expand to the width of eleven inches and a quarter, and reach to within an inch and a quarter of the tip of the tail; greater wing coverts, dark brown, broadly edged with pale brown or greyish white, most apparently after the autumnal moult; lesser wing coverts, blackish brown, edged and tipped with pale brown or buff greyish white, the light-coloured ends of both forming bars across the wing, most distinctly after the moult; primaries, dark brown; the first is the longest, but all the first three are nearly equal in length, the second very nearly as long as the first, and the third as the second; secondaries, dark brown, more broadly edged with a paler tint; tertiaries, dark brown, long, also with a broad outer edge of pale brown. The tail, which is rather long, has the outside feather on each side brown; the narrow outer web, and part of the inner one, in a wedge shape, dull white tinged with brown; the next feather is also brown, with only a small patch of dull white at the end of the inner web; all the other feathers blackish brown, edged with lighter, except the two middle ones, which are greyish brown, having lighter margins than the rest; upper tail coverts, olive grey brown, without the dark markings on the centre of the feathers. Legs and toes, pale yellowish brown or grey; claws, pale dusky brown, the hind claw considerably curved, and shorter than the hind toe.

The female resembles the male in plumage, but she is rather less in size. Length, a little over six inches.

The spots on the breast are not so well defined. The wings expand to the width of eleven inches.

The young birds at first have the bill paler in colour than the old birds; the breast with more yellow; the spots on the front of the neck narrower; the back more tinged with green, and the dark marks darker, the margins light greyish yellow; the two outside tail feathers greyish white on the inner web, and the outside one pale brownish grey on the outer web. The legs, toes, and claws, very light brown.

## ROCK PIPIT.

ROCK LARK. SEA LARK. FIELD LARK.  
 DUSKY LARK. SHORE LARK. SHORE PIPIT.  
 SEA TITLING.

<i>Anthus aquaticus</i> ,	BECHSTEIN. GOULD. SELBY.
<i>Anthus campestris</i> ,	BEWICK.
<i>Anthus rupestris</i> ,	NILSON.
<i>Anthus petrosus</i> ,	FLEMING. JENYNS.
<i>Alauda campestris spinoletta</i> ,	GMELIN.
<i>Alauda obscura</i> ,	GMELIN. PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Alauda petrosa</i> ,	LINNÆAN TRANSACTIONS.

*Anthus*—Some small bird. *Aquaticus*—Aquatic—frequenting  
 watery places.

THE Rock Lark, or Rock Pipit, is an interesting, though very common species, and another of our true 'ab origine' birds.

This hardy species braves the severe cold of the polar regions, to which it spreads from the temperate parts of Europe. It is well known in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Greenland; as also in France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, and other more temperate parts of the continent. In Orkney and Shetland it is a very abundant species, and also is found in the Ferroe Islands.

It appears to give a preference to those parts of the coast which are rocky or hilly, but it is also found, and



1. The first part of the document is a list of names and their corresponding addresses. The names are listed in a column on the left, and the addresses are listed in a column on the right. The names are: John Doe, Jane Smith, and Bob Johnson. The addresses are: 123 Main St, 456 Elm St, and 789 Oak St.

that in plenty, in those parts which are of an exactly opposite character.

It is stationary with us throughout the year, but it would seem to be in some small degree migratory, or rather moveable; for W. R. Fisher, Esq. has stated in his "Natural History of Yarmouth," that in Norfolk it arrives on the coast in the autumn, generally in the month of November.

These birds do not associate in flocks, but several are often to be seen in the same immediate neighbourhood. If disturbed it does not go far off, but flutters about in the neighbourhood, frequently repeating its note, settling in a restless and uneasy manner here and there, vibrating its body, and evidently anxious for your departure.

In general the flight of the Rock Pipit is a mere flitting from place to place; but in the summer-time they often mount up to a considerable height, uttering their wild little note with each pulsation of the wings, and then rapidly descend in a slanting manner, in silence, and with apparently closed wings.

Its food consists of small marine and other insects, small crustacea and worms, which it seeks and finds among the marine plants thrown up along the coasts, or growing on the rocks which, at low water are left uncovered by the receding tide. Macgillivray observes that it also feeds on seeds.

The note is in general a mere rather shrill 'cheep,' but I think there is a wildness in it, which invests it with an interest that it might not otherwise possess. It has also a small warble, charming no doubt in the ears of its species, but not so in ours, in comparison with that of more highly-gifted birds in this respect.

These birds commence the work of nidification early



in the season—at the end of April or beginning of May, and pitch their tent either on or in the immediate neighbourhood of the sea shore, or water not far from it.

The nest is placed in holes or ledges in rocks, generally, but not always, at a low elevation, or on the ground, sheltered by some little projection or eminence. It is made of fine dry grass and marine plants, but is very loosely compacted, the inside being either not at all, or more or less lined with hair, or finer materials of any kind that it can procure.

The eggs, which have very little polish on them, and vary much in appearance, are four or five, and occasionally six in number. They are of a pale yellowish, yellowish white, or whitish grey colour, sometimes tinged with green, spotted with reddish brown, almost confluent at the larger end; some are wholly, or almost wholly, brown, and some wholly greenish grey, with a streak surrounding the base.

The young are hatched early in the spring.

Male; weight, about seven drachms; length, six inches and three-quarters, or nearly so; bill, dusky, the upper one yellowish brown, except at the tip, and both yellowish at the base; iris, deep brown; over it is a narrow yellowish white or whitish streak, not always conspicuous, sometimes tinged with green, and another beneath the hinder part of it. There are a few short bristly feathers at the base of the bill; head and crown, brown with a tinge of olive, the shafts of the feathers being a little darker; neck, on the sides, greenish white, with brown streaks; on the back it is the same as the head, as is the nape. Chin, dull yellowish white, the middle of each feather by the shaft deeper coloured; throat, dull yellowish white, streaked with brown; breast, dull greenish white, with brown spots and streaks; lower down it is

yellowish white, with only a few dark brown streaks, and on the sides olive brown; back, dull greenish brown, the centre of each feather dark brown.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest of the whole, the next three successively a little shorter, the fifth still shorter; greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky, edged with pale olive; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, the same. Tail, dusky; it is rather long, and extends nearly an inch and a half beyond the wings when closed; the outside feather has the outer web and part of the inner one, dull greenish white, the tip whitish; the second feather is only edged at the end and tip with this colour, the others are fringed with light olive; there is most white on these feathers in the spring season; the two central ones are lighter-coloured and shorter than the others, and the next three on each side very dark brown; upper tail coverts, dull greenish brown; under tail coverts, light brown, or pale yellowish or greenish white, changing to almost white. Legs, reddish brown; toes, the same; claws, black, and somewhat curved, the hinder one much more than the rest, and longer than the toe.

These birds are more or less tinged with grey, and less or more with the olive colour, according to the season of the year.

The female is very similar to the male in plumage, and nearly, but not quite, of equal length.

In the young, the bill is lighter-coloured at the base; the head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, are tinted with greenish ash-colour; chin and throat, dull yellowish white; breast, dull yellowish, much streaked with greenish ash-colour, more or less deep; the outside feather on each side of the tail, has the edge and spot deep olive ash-colour.

## SHORE LARK.

*Alauda alpestris*,

JENYNS. GOULD. EYTON.

*Alauda cornuta*,

RICHARDSON AND SWAINSON.

*Alauda*—A Lark.    *Alpestris*—..... ?

THIS species is a native of the northern parts of Europe, Asia, and America, being found in the most abundance in the last-named continent. It is also said to occur at the southern extremity of South America, on those stony shores which have perpetuated the name of the enterprising Magellan; and, if it be so, on others doubtless in all that part of the world as well. According to Temminck, it is found commonly in Saxony, Germany, and Holland, both in winter and summer, and breeds in the latter.

The instances of the occurrence of the Shore Lark in this country are but very few. One, a male in immature plumage, was shot on the beach at Sherringham, in the county of Norfolk, in March, 1830. A second has been recorded by Thomas Eyton, Esq., as having been killed in Lincolnshire; and Mr. Yarrell mentions two which were obtained on a Down in Kent. "Two and two make four."

In severe weather these birds move towards the warmer climates of the south or the north, according as they have been localized north or south of the equator. They move thus in the beginning of September, flying in straggling numbers, hardly to be





flocks, and at but a low elevation above the water, previously collected together in small parties of ten or fifty, the members of different families. In the beginning of June they again retrace their steps, after their flight, to their native land, the inhospitable climes of the frozen north; few, however, wander to the very extremest polar regions.

The Shore Lark is rather shy in its habits, but, when engaged with its young, sits very close, either from a temporary change of disposition, or from anxiety for its brood, as if conscious of the protection of nature has afforded to it in the assimilation of the colour of its plumage to that of the scanty verdure to be found where it has its dwelling. Should, however, danger seem to approach too closely, the mother flutters away from any chance intruder, using lameness so cunningly, that none but one unskilled to the sight could refrain from pursuit. Her partner immediately joins her in mimic wretchedness, uttering a soft and plaintive note. It would appear that these birds may be kept in confinement.

Their food consists of the buds, blossoms, and seeds of the stunted vegetation of the Arctic regions, and such insects as may there be also found. Flies it expertly on the wing; and at times it betakes itself to the sea-shore, to search for minute shell-fish or crustacea. The male bird sings sweetly while on the wing, though its song is comparatively short. It rises from the moss, or the bare rock, in a short oblique flight of a few yards, begins and ends its madrigal, performs a few irregular evolutions, and returns to the ground. Here also it sings, but less frequently, and with less illness. It has at times a ventriloquistic power, which makes its note seem like that of another species. When

the young are hatched, the music, for the most part, ceases—the “cares of a family” are felt by the feathered as well as by the human species. “There is a time for all things,” says the wise man; “a time to weep, and a time to laugh.”

In the desolate and sterile tracts which extend in the high latitudes from the sea-shore to regions, if possible, still more savagely wild and barren, the whole face of the country is described as one boundless succession of hoary granite rock, covered with mosses and lichens, varying in size and hue—some green, others as white as snow, and others of divers colours of every tint, and growing in large tufts and patches. Here the Shore Lark builds, and rears her young.

The nest, which is composed of fine grasses, circularly disposed, and lined with feathers, exactly resembles in colour the moss in which it is embedded, and is placed on the ground, in the desolate regions where moss is almost the only vegetation.

The eggs are four or five in number, greyish white, spotted with pale blue and brown spots. They are laid in the beginning of July.

The young, says Mr. Audubon, which are hatched about the middle of July, and fully fledged by the first of August, leave the nest before they are able to fly, and follow their parents over the moss, in which they drop and endeavour to conceal themselves on the appearance of any danger. They run nimbly, and are fed for about a week. If observed and pursued the same author further relates, that they utter a so “peep,” open their wings to aid them in their escap and separating, make off with great celerity. On such occasions it is difficult to secure more than one of the unless several persons be present, when each can over-

a bird. The parents all this time are following the enemy overhead, lamenting the danger to which their young are exposed.

Male; length, about seven inches; bill, bluish horn-colour, almost black at the tip: a black streak passes from its base to the eye, and spreads out behind it. Iris, dark brown, over it is a yellow streak: some bristly feathers cover the nostrils. Forehead, yellow, greenish ash-colour after the autumnal moult; head on the sides, and between the bill and eye, black; on the front of the crown there is a broad transverse black band, which ends on each side with a few long and pointed black feathers, which the bird elevates at pleasure; the back of the head, black, which turns to dusky brown in the winter, and is mixed with the yellow feathers at the edges; crown, greyish brown. Neck on the back, greyish brown tinged with red; nape, greyish brown, the central part of the feathers being darker than the edges; chin, throat, and sides of the neck, fine pale yellow, white in summer. Breast above, the same, with a gorget of black across the upper part of it, which fades to dusky brown in the winter; below, it is dull white, and tinged with a reddish brown on the sides; back, brown, the centre of each feather being darker than the edges; in summer it becomes light brownish red, and has a tinge of purple: after the autumnal moult it is imbued with grey.

The wings, which extend to within three-quarters of an inch of the end of the tail, have the first three quill feathers very nearly equal in length, and the longest in the wing; the second rather the longest, the first being a little longer than the third, the fourth a quarter of an inch shorter than the third; greater wing coverts, dark brown with light brown margins, broadest



and most distinct after the moult; lesser wing coverts, dark brown tinged with red, and tipped with white, most so after the moult; primaries, dusky brown, with very narrow light-coloured edges, widest after the moult; secondaries, brown; tertiaries, brown, some with light brown, and some with whitish margins, widest after the moult. Tail, black, except on part of the edge of the outer web of the outside feather on each side, which is white; the two middle feathers are dark brown, with light brown margins; upper tail coverts, brown, the central part of the feathers darker than the edges; under tail coverts, dull white. Legs, toes, and claws, bluish black; the hind claw straight, and longer than the toe.

The female is a little smaller than the male, being about six inches and a half in length, and her colours duller; the streak over the eye pale yellow. Head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, of the same colour as the back, the black changing into brown and greyish. The breast has only a narrow brownish black band, fringed with yellow on its upper part; back, with more grey than in the male, with the shafts of the feathers darker, and with hardly any of the red tint.

The young males after their first autumnal moult resemble the adult female.





## SHORT-TOED LARK.

*Alauda brachydactyla*, GOULD.

*Alauda*—A Lark.    *Brachydactyla*.    *Brachus*—Short.  
*Dactylos*—A finger.

I SHOULD be glad if the proverb that “least said is soonest mended” applied to the case of a bird of whose Natural History one knows but little; but small as the present amount of my information about the Short-toed Lark is, I have no present prospect of increasing it.

This species is common in the southern parts of Europe—in Sicily, France, and Spain, and is also found in Germany. It occurs in fact along all the shores of the Mediterranean, both in Africa and in Asia.

One was caught in a net near Shrewsbury, in Shropshire, on the 25th. of October, 1841.

The food of this bird consists of insects and seeds.

The nest is placed on the ground.

The eggs are four or five in number, and of a dull yellow colour.

Male; length, five inches and three-quarters; bill, light brown. There is a yellowish white streak over the eye. Head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, yellowish brown, with the centre of each feather darker than the rest; chin, throat, and breast, white, the latter tinged on the middle and the sides with yellowish brown; back, yellowish brown, the centre of each feather being

darker than the edges. The second quill feather is the longest, the first and third a little shorter; primaries and secondaries, dusky brown. The tertiaries extend as far as the end of the closed wing. Tail, dusky brown, the two outer feathers white on their outer edge. Legs, toes, and claws which are short, light brown.

The female resembles the male, but her plumage is more dull in colour.

The young, during the first autumn, have the outer edges of each feather margined with buff.





## WOOD LARK.

<i>Alauda arborea</i> ,	PENNANT. MONTAGU. BEWICK.
<i>Alauda nemorosa</i> ,	GMELIN.
<i>Alauda cristatella</i> ,	LATHAM.

*Alauda*—A Lark. *Arborea*—Of, or pertaining to trees.

THE Wood Lark is found in Europe—in Germany, France, Holland, Italy, Crete, Corfu, and other countries of the south of this continent, where it is a resident throughout the year; and also in Denmark, Russia, and Sweden, but only as a summer visitant. It occurs also in Asia Minor.

In this country it is met with in Yorkshire, pretty frequently in the neighbourhood of York, but farther north than that city it becomes rare; Sussex, Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, Devonshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, and, though but sparingly, in Cornwall, and Northumberland. It is not a common bird; I have never obtained but one, namely at Langmoor, near Charmouth, Dorsetshire, many years ago.

In Ireland, it is known in the counties of Antrim and Down, and no doubt in others too; but there also it is uncommon.

Mr. Thomas Edwards has informed me of his having found this bird so far north as Banff; and Mr. Heysham has related that it is occasionally taken near Dumfries.

In the Orkney Islands it appears to be unknown,



for it is not recorded in the "Natural History of Orkney," published by Dr. Baikie and Mr. Heddle. Meyer says that in Shetland it is hardly known.

Cultivated districts are the resort of the Wood Lark, as its name implies; it prefers the rich parts of the country where hedge-row timber abounds, the great ornament of the English landscape.

It remains with us throughout the year.

In hard weather a few collect together, but for the most part only the members of the original family, six or seven in all. They are easily tamed, and become exceedingly familiar, even answering, when called to, with a few liquid notes. They seem to roost at night both on the ground and in trees.

The Wood Lark commences its flight from the ground, a bush, or the top of a tree, with a short straight progress, which it then begins to change for an upward spiral one, gradually enlarging the area of each circle as it ascends. When the summit, so to speak, is gained, it sometimes floats about in a similar manner; and at others, after hovering about, descends again as it rose, in circles; often with wings stretched out, and seemingly motionless; and when it again reaches the earth, it runs a few steps along the ground. Mr. Selby says that it occasionally remains an hour on the wing, and Bechstein even several hours. On the ground they walk in rather a slow manner.

Its food consists of insects, which it sometimes chases like the Flycatcher, but mostly seeks upon the ground, where it also meets with caterpillars and worms. It also, at times, when the snow shuts up the sources of its usual supplies, eats small seeds, grain, and green herbage,

Its note is very rich, and rather of a plaintive cast,

and is prolonged, it is said, during the warm nights of summer. It has been heard even in the months of January and December, and is regularly commenced in March and April, if the weather be fine. It is uttered both when the musician is perched upon the branch of a tree, or when wheeling and hovering in the air in the manner already described, as is its wont:—

“High in the air and poised upon its wings,  
Unseen, the soft enamoured Wood Lark sings.”

Selby and Montagu say that it is sometimes heard, though but rarely, from the ground.

Early in March these birds pair, and commence building their nests about the middle of the month, if the season be favourable.

The nest is placed upon the ground, beneath some low bush or tuft of grass, or at the foot of a tree; occasionally under the shelter of a fence or paling, or on a bank; one has been known on the trunk of a fallen oak, on the topmost bough of which, perhaps, in previous years when it still stood in all its pride, the bird had warbled forth her strains, and now when levelled with the earth, she “could not bid the spot adieu,” but sang a daily requiem over the fallen remains. The outside materials are small roots, grass, and sometimes moss, and the lining smaller grasses, with occasionally a little hair.

The eggs, which are laid at the end of March or beginning of April, and also in July, there seeming to be two broods in the year, are four or five in number, of a pale reddish white, or yellowish brown ground colour, spotted and speckled with dull reddish brown, or dark grey, or brownish grey, with sometimes a few irregular dusky lines at the larger end.

Male; weight, about eight drachms; length, a little more than six inches; bill, dark brown on the upper part, the lower one and the base of the upper one, pale yellowish brown; iris, dark brown: over it is a pale brown or yellowish white streak. The feathers about the base of the bill are bristly at the tips; a sort of crest is formed by the feathers on the top of the head, which are of a light brown colour, streaked with dark brown; neck on the back, yellowish brown, on the sides, reddish; nape, brown, streaked with dark brownish black; chin and throat, pale yellowish brown, with a reddish tinge; breast, pale yellowish brown, with a few small streaked spots of dark brown on the middle part; back, light reddish brown on the upper part, brown on the lower, dashed with dark brownish black near the tips of the feathers.

The wings expand to the width of one foot and half an inch, and extend to within rather less than an inch of the end of the tail; the first feather is very short, the second not quite so long as the third or the fourth, which latter is the longest in the wing; the fifth nearly as long as the second: Yarrell gives the third as the longest. Greater wing coverts, dark brown, tipped with pale brown; lesser wing coverts, dark brown, some of them tipped with pale brown, both making two rather conspicuous bands across the wings; primaries and secondaries, dusky brown, edged and tipped with light reddish brown; tertiaries, dark brown, edged with light brown. The tail, which is short, of twelve feathers, square at the tip, has the outer feather on each side pale brown, brownish white at the tip, with a dark brown patch on the inner side; the two middle feathers are pale brown, broadly edged with reddish brown, and the remaining eight

brownish black, with an angular spot of white at the tip; upper tail coverts, brown; under tail coverts, pale yellowish brown. Legs and toes, light brown; claws, light yellowish brown, the hind claw straight, and half as long again as the hind toe.

The female strongly resembles the male, but is rather smaller in size; the dark markings are larger, and there is less of the yellow shade on the breast.

The young have the front and sides of the neck marked with angular dusky spots, part of the breast tinged with yellowish red, and the back yellowish brown, the feathers having a band of dusky-colour and light edges.

## SKY LARK.

LAVROCK. FIELD LARK.

*Alauda arvensis*,  
*Alauda vulgaris*,

PENNANT. MONTAGU.  
 WILLUGHBY. RAY.

*Alauda*—A Lark. *Arvensis*—Of, or appertaining to fields.

THIS universal favourite is a native of the whole of the continent of Europe, but appears to be unknown in Iceland, Greenland, or the Ferroe Islands. The greater part of those which are seen in Russia, Siberia, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, in the summer, leave for the more genial climate of Greece and Italy, before the wintry blasts begin to sweep over the lands of the frozen north: it is also known in Asia Minor, and other parts of the Asiatic continent, and in the northern parts of Africa.

In this country it is very abundant from north to south.

The Lark is to be found in all situations, but particularly, in the winter half of the year, in ploughed or stubble fields, especially, in the latter case, when they are sown with clover seeds.

In the "British Song Birds," a doubt is expressed as to whether the Lark almost entirely quits the north for the south in the winter; but I can only say that there are hundreds to be seen in Yorkshire in almost every large field, even in the severest weather; the same



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large flocks into which they have begun to collect towards the end of autumn. Even in the Orkney, and no doubt therefore in the Shetland Islands too, they do not seem to quit for more southern regions, on the approach of winter, unless it be in, or rather before, some unusually severe weather, when they move southwards in numerous bodies. In some seasons they continue together until a comparatively late period. As many as sixty have been seen in a flock on the 24th. of March: this was the case in the year 1838.

It would appear that many visit us at that season from the continent, and in the south of England they are, at such times, seen to move in a westerly direction. They also cross from Scotland to Ireland.

Larks are thoroughly terrestrial in their habits; it is but rarely that they alight on a tree, even a low bush, a wall, or a hedge; though I have several times seen them do so. They pass the day, except when soaring, and roost at night, upon the ground. They are sprightly in all their motions, and if anything like danger be observed or suspected, they may be seen frequently stopping to look round, raising themselves up, and elevating the feathers of the head as a crest; or else crouching down, and hiding themselves as much as they can, which the assimilation of their colour to that of the places they frequent, renders easy: ordinarily, on the ground, they move rather quickly about in a running manner, now quicker, and now more slow: they often lie very close till you almost walk up to them. They may be frequently seen dusting themselves in the roads, and at other times they seem to be fond of settling themselves in such places. This very day, on which I have written the foregoing, the 3rd. of March, I disturbed a pair, which rose up from the middle of



the road on which I was walking; and on coming back an hour or two afterwards, I found that they had returned, and they rose again from the same place: there was not a particle of the "March dust," "a peck" of which is said to be "worth a king's ransom;" but the traces of frost and snow were still remaining.

These birds, like so many others, shew a great attachment to their young. In "The Naturalist," old series, Mr. Edward Blyth mentions that a mower having accidentally cut off with a scythe the upper part of a nest, without injuring the sitting bird, she did not fly away; and it was discovered about an hour afterwards that she had, in the interval, constructed a dome of dry grass over the nest. Instances are on record in which they have removed their eggs as a precautionary means of preservation; and Mr. Jesse records, in his "Gleanings in Natural History," that a clergyman's attention being drawn, as he was walking, by the cry of a bird, he discovered a pair of Larks rising out of an adjoining stubble field and then crossing over the road on which he was, one of them having a young bird in its claws, which was dropped in the opposite field, at a height of about thirty feet from the ground, and killed by the fall. The affectionate parent was endeavouring to convey its young one to a place of safety, but her strength failed in the attempt. The long hind claws seem well adapted for this feat.

The Lark seems to have, occasionally at least, kindly feelings even towards the young of another species. One of these birds, which had been taken from the nest when very young, and brought up in a cage, was turned out when it was able to fly, and some young Goldfinches put into its place. The Lark returned to her former abode, and was again put into the cage

with the Goldfinches. They were weak and feeble, and she not only brooded over them, but fed them. Others have been known to continue to feed their young when captured with them, apparently unobservant of the change, and Mr. Weir has written of one, a male bird, which, while in confinement, acted the part of a faithful step-father, having brought up a number of his own species, and likewise several broods of Linnets, and, what was still more curious, one which was only a few weeks old assisted him most assiduously in giving food to a family of young birds.

In the wild state, if on the nest, the hen bird will either crouch close, in the hope, very often realized, of escaping detection, or, if disturbed, will fly off to a short distance, in anxious distress, in a low cowering manner, or hover about a little way overhead, uttering a note of alarm, which soon brings up the male. Larks are very good eating, and countless thousands are taken for the table, but still their numbers never seem to decrease.

As to the flight of the Lark, it is indeed a "lofty" one, continued upwards, higher and higher as the spring advances and the sun, towards whom he soars, gets higher in the heavens; up, and up, into the very highest regions of the air, so that the eye is literally oftentimes unable to follow it; but if you watch long enough, you will again perceive the vocalist, and downwards in measured cadence, both of song and descent, but rather more rapidly than he went up, he will stoop; nearer and nearer he will come, until at last, suspended for a moment over the spot which contains his treasures, for whose delight perhaps he has been warbling all the while his loudest and sweetest notes, and has kept them all along in his sight, slanting

at the end for a greater or less distance, probably as danger may or may not appear to be nigh, he drops with half-closed and unmoved wings—and is at home.

“A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there.

Which, search where you will, you'll ne'er meet with elsewhere.”

This flight frequently occupies nearly ten minutes; sometimes, it is said, as much as an hour, during which time both throat and wings seem taxed to the utmost, but yet apparently without fatigue of either, even though the loftiest regions of the “thin air” have been ascended to and traversed.

In rising up, the Lark turns towards the wind, if any be blowing; but this is only what might naturally be expected; and in settling down, the tail is seen to be expanded. At first rising, the flight is fluttering and irregular, then a few reaches forward are made, upwards or in a slanting direction, and then in curves, or parts of circles, the bird ascends, and when at a high elevation wheels in circles, singing all the while. In the winter season, when an upward soaring is scarcely attempted, the flight is slightly undulated, performed by a few flappings of the wings and then a further progress, either in the way of a short hovering about or a wheeling here and there, before the ground is again settled on, which it is rather abruptly at the close.

Their food consists of grain, grasses, and seeds, and also of insects, caterpillars, snails, and worms; and they may often be seen running into little pools of water, probably in search of any insects that may happen to be there. In quest of these they have also been seen running along the top of a hedge. The Lark uses a quantity of sand and gravel with its food.

The note of the Sky Lark, so rich and clear, full and varied, is universally appreciated, so that one may surely say "where is the man with soul so dead," who, when on some clear bright day in early spring, when all nature is full of hope, and in the blue sky above scarce a cloud is to be seen he for the first time that year hears the well-known carol, can help turning his eyes upwards to detect the songster, and follow the happy bird, to trace, till he can no longer follow it, save faintly with his ear, in its aerial ascent, step by step, as it were, in the "open firmament of Heaven," one of the "fowls that may fly" there, by the permission given to them from the Great Creator when they were first called into existence? I think it is old Izaak Walton who says "O God! what happiness must Thou have prepared for Thy saints in Heaven, when Thou hast provided bad men with such enjoyments upon earth!" In descending, too, the same clear note is still heard, and it is sometimes continued again after the bird has alighted on the ground, and is occasionally uttered by it when perched on a bush, and sometimes when hovering over a field at but a little height. It has been heard long after sunset, even when the night had become quite dark. If you have a Lark in a cage, give him his liberty, and make him happy.

And not only is the song of the Sky Lark thus beautiful, but it is abundantly bestowed upon us. It is to be heard throughout three-quarters of the year, nay, one may almost say, in some degree, throughout the year, for in the beginning of January in the present year, I think I heard, as others have before, an attempt at it. Mr. Macgillivray has heard the full song in Fifeshire, an appropriate locality, on the 13th.

of February, and again on the 12th. of March, 1835. It is also uttered on the ground, from the top of a clod, or even in the concealment of the grass, as well as in the air, though not so much so in the former case. It is commenced as early as half-past one and two o'clock in the morning, and is continued at intervals till after the sun has again gone down. The female sings as well as the male. In the winter a faint chirp is the ordinary note.

When "April showers" begin to give promise of returning spring, or even earlier, in the beginning of March, as I have myself seen them, and in February, the Larks begin to separate from their companions of the winter months, with whom since the autumn they have associated in large straggling flocks, and form their "reunions," of a very different nature to those of the fashionable world. In the one there is that, of which in the other there is none; and this, as Aristotle says, makes "not a little but the whole difference." Two broods are frequently reared in the year, the first of which is fledged by the middle or end of June, or even the middle of May, the eggs being laid the end of April or beginning of May; and the second in August, the eggs being laid in June or July. In confinement, three and even four sets of eggs have been known to be laid. Mr. Jesse says that if some of the eggs be removed, and only one or two be left, the bird will continue to lay for a long time, but that if three be left she will sit.

The nest is placed in a hollow scraped in the ground, with or without the fortuitous shelter of a clod of earth or tuft of herbage. It is placed in various situations, and is made of grasses, and a few chance leaves, the coarser outside, the finer on the

inner part. The male bird appears to bring the materials to the spot, where the female is engaged in arranging them. The young are hatched in about a fortnight: they do not quit the nest until fully fledged, but return to it to roost at night for some time after they have left it.

The eggs, three, four, or five in number, vary much both in form and colour; some are of a greyish white colour, with a tinge of purple or green, and freckled and mottled nearly all over with a darker shade of grey, greyish brown, or brown; others are of a deep sombre colour, and in some the chief part of the colour is concentrated at the larger end, either wholly or only partially around it. They are usually placed with their smaller ends towards the centre.

Male; length, seven inches and a quarter to seven and a half; bill, dark brown above, and pale yellowish brown at the base of the lower part; iris, dark brown: over it is a pale yellowish brown streak. The feathers at the base of the bill are tipped with bristles; a sort of crest is frequently raised on the top of the head, the feathers there being rather long; head on the sides pale yellowish brown, on the crown, dark brown, the edges of the feathers paler than the rest; neck on the back, and nape, brown of three shades, the centre of the feathers, along the shaft, being the darkest, and the margin the lightest part; chin, pale yellowish brown; throat and breast on the upper part, the same, with a tinge of rufous, and spotted with small streaks of dark brown; underneath, the latter is pale yellowish white; back, as the nape.

The wings, which expand to nearly the width of one foot three inches, extend to within an inch and a quarter of the end of the tail; the first feather is

extremely short, the second shorter than the third, which is the longest in the wing, the fourth almost the same length; greater and lesser wing coverts, brown, with broad light brown edges; primaries, dusky brown, the second with the outer web brownish white, the others edged with the same; secondaries, dusky brown, tipped with whitish, and edged more broadly with reddish brown; tertiaries, brown, with broad light brown edges. The tail, somewhat forked, dusky brown, the edges of each feather being light brown; the two central ones are brown, broadly edged with light reddish brown; the outer feather on each side is white on the outer web, excepting at the base, with a longitudinal oblique streak of white on the inner web; the next to it dusky on the inner web, the outer web, or the greater portion of it, white: all the feathers are rather broad. Upper tail coverts, as the nape; under tail coverts, pale yellowish brown; legs, yellowish brown, paler in some specimens, the joints dusky; toes, dusky brown, the middle one rather long, the hind one very long, and slightly curved; claws, dusky brown, the hind one very long and straight, except the outer half, which is slightly curved.

The female closely resembles the male in appearance and plumage. Length, nearly seven inches: the wings expand to the width of one foot one inch.

The young are of a light yellowish grey colour, the feathers of the upper parts being dusky, tipped and margined with the former. In their second plumage the dark markings are darker than in the old birds, and the bill and feet paler; the claws, especially of the hind toe, shorter.

Varieties occasionally occur; some are seen pure white, and others cream-colour, and some, though

these are rare cases, mottled with white. William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, describes one which had the primaries, secondaries, and tail snowy white; and another, a true albino, with red eyes. In confinement they sometimes turn black, probably the result of some peculiarity in the food; one such, however, recorded by Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, has been shot in a wild state. In confinement, too, the claws have been known to grow to the length of two inches.



## CRESTED LARK.

*Alauda cristata,*

GOULD.

THE Crested Lark is a European bird, an inhabitant of Italy, Sicily, Crete, Switzerland, Turkey, Greece, Spain, Hungary, France, Germany, Poland, Holland, Belgium, Siberia, and Russia, the latter in the summer, and other countries of this continent; as also in Asia Minor, and in Egypt and other northern parts of Africa.

In this country one was shot in the county of Sussex, and another is said to have been killed near Tancy, in Ireland; but the description does not seem to me to correspond.

It is a migratory species, moving from south to north in the spring, and backwards again in the autumn.

This bird is represented as approaching near to villages and houses, and as being rather solitary than gregarious in its habits.

Its food consists of insects of various sorts, worms, and grain.

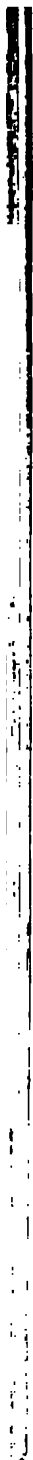
Its song is sweet and agreeable, and is continued till the month of September.

The nest is placed on the ground, and is made of grasses.

The eggs are four or five in number, of a light grey colour, spotted with light and dark brown.



CRESTED LARK.



Male; length, six inches and three-quarters; bill, rather strong and large, and decurved towards the point, brown along the ridge and at the end, and paler on the sides and at the base; iris, dark brown: a buff white streak passes from it over the eye. Head on the crown, reddish brown, with a few of the feathers elongated, forming a crest, and pointing backwards; neck on the back, and nape, dark brown, in front pale yellowish brown; chin, white; throat and breast, pale yellow brown, streaked in front and on the sides with darker brown; back, brown, the shaft and centre of each feather dark brown. The second quill feather of the wing is the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, brown, the shaft and centre of each feather darker, and the edges buff white; tertiaries, edged with buff white. The tail has the two middle feathers nearly uniform light brown, the outer one on each side light brown, with a buff white margin on the outside, the rest of the feathers dark brown; legs, toes, and claws, pale brown.

The female is rather less in size than the male, and the crest is less conspicuous.

This bird, or rather one should say a bird by this name, as it seems doubtful whether our older writers knew it at all, has been made by some of them into two species, by the names of the Greater and Lesser Crested Lark, the latter being the female, or the young, of their supposed Crested Lark.

I do not read of any varieties of this bird as assuming the 'drapeau blanc.'

## SNOW BUNTING.

SNOW FLAKE. SNOW FLECK. SNOW FOWL.  
 TAWNY BUNTING. GREAT PIED MOUNTAIN FINCH.  
 MOUNTAIN BUNTING. LESSER MOUNTAIN FINCH  
 BRAMBLING. GREATER BRAMBLING.

<i>Plectrophanes nivalis</i> ,	MEYER. SELBY.
<i>Emberiza nivalis</i> ,	LINNEÆUS. GMELIN. LATHAM.
<i>Emberiza glacialis</i> ,	LATHAM. PENNANT.
<i>Emberiza mustelina</i> ,	GMELIN.
<i>Emberiza montana</i> ,	GMELIN. LATHAM. PENNANT.

*Plectrophanes*. *Plëctron*—A spur. *Phainō*—To shew.  
*Nivalis*—Snowy.

THE plate is taken from a drawing by my friend, the Rev. R. P. Alington, M. A., Rector of Swinhope, Lincolnshire.

This pretty-looking species is a native of the icy countries of the Arctic regions, and the islands of the Polar seas. The Rev. Dr. Scoresby, whose name is so well known as Captain Scoresby, the hardy “voyageur” to far severer climes than even those where the “Canadian Boat Song” is heard, met with great numbers on the frozen lands of Spitzbergen.

It is found in all the northern parts of Europe and America, and builds in the North Georgian Islands, Melville Island, Southampton Island, Lapland, Iceland, Nova Zembla, Greenland, Siberia, Norway, Sweden.



1  
Sparrow Finch



the Ferroe Isles, and no doubt in various other northern countries; it occurs also in Germany, France, Austria, and Holland, and even in some instances in Italy.

It is a winter visitant to Shetland and the Orkney Islands, where as many as fifty-seven have been killed at one shot; Scotland, and the north of England and Ireland, advancing in some few instances to the extreme south of our island; but it must be there sadly out of its element, like some Scotch ladies whom I heard the other day lamenting that they never found it cold enough in England.

Sir Oswald Mosley, Bart., relates in the "Zoologist," page 1209, that one was met with near Rolleston Hall, his seat, near Burton-upon-Trent, Staffordshire, in the month of October, 1845. It was knocked down by a labourer with a stone.

The numbers of these birds diminish from Yorkshire southwards, in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire, and a few have been met with occasionally even in Surrey, Sussex, and Devonshire, and other southern counties. One was shot near Liskeard, in Cornwall, as N. Hare, Esq. informs me, in March, 1851; one near Falmouth, by T. Harvey, Esq.; one by Mr. Copeland at Pendennis Castle, in October, 1843; three by Mr. May in subsequent years, between the Castle and Penance Point; and one by Mr. Row, of Devonport, on Roborough Down, October 11th., 1851; and I have one, presented to me by Mr. John Dickson, of Nafferton, which was shot near Seamer, in the East-Riding of Yorkshire, on the 25th. of March, 1851.

Mountainous regions are their natural resort, which they leave for lower and more sheltered grounds when severe weather comes on.

The Snow Buntings move southwards about the end



of October, betaking themselves to the sea-shores of Scotland, and also to many parts of England in severe weather, retiring inland at intervals, or as it becomes milder, when they resort to farm-yards and roads, where they meet with grain of various kinds. In the year 1849, a few were seen at Waxham, near Yarmouth, in Norfolk, by W. E. Cater, Esq., of Queen's College, Cambridge, as early as the 27th. of September. It would seem, from the fact of Mr. Macgillivray's having seen both old and young birds together in the month of August, 1830, that some build on the Grampian Hills, renowned in song as the dwelling of "Young Norval;" but for the most part they remove to their more favourite haunts about the middle of April. The young appear to be only able to fly by about the end of July; and it is asserted that they venture farther southwards than the old birds.

These birds, which are believed to pair for life, seem, at the time when they have young, to be fearless, it being but little experience of man, as an enemy, that they have had in their lonely climes. They are very good eating, as are the rest of the Buntings. They may be kept, and have even been known to breed, in confinement.

Their flight is described as low, performed in an undulated line, by means of repeated flappings, and short intervals of cessation; when they have arrived at a fitting place, they wheel suddenly round, and alight rather abruptly, when the white of the wings and tail becomes very conspicuous. They run with great celerity along the sand, moving each foot alternately, and when engaged in this manner, doubtless in search of food, or of small sand and gravel, may be easily approached within a few yards. They usually perch on a crag or

rock, the top of a wall, a rail, or a stack, and sometimes it is said, on trees: they roost on the ground.

Their food consists principally of the different sorts of grain, and the seeds of grasses and other plants, as also of small mollusca, the caterpillars and chrysalides of insects, and insects themselves.

The note is low and soft, and it is uttered on the wing when the male bird serenades his mate, rising a little way into the air, and hovering about with expanded wings and tail.

The nest, which is made of dry grass, lined with hair and a few feathers, is generally fixed in the crevice of a rock, or among stones on the ground. Captain Lyons, R. N., found one placed in the bosom of a dead Esquimaux child, a situation suggestive of affecting thoughts, but the history connected with which must remain unknown until that day when both land and sea shall give up their dead. Others have been found under the shelter of the drift timber, which is, alas! but too frequently to be met with on the shores of the frozen seas. How many a tale also does it tell with its expressive though silent voice,

"Of those  
For whom the place was kept,  
At board and hearth so long."

Fervently do I trust that the "brave old oak" of the gallant Sir John Franklin's trusty ships, may yet be found to have afforded no shelter for the nest of the Snow-flake, but that in the words of the still-used form of the old bills of lading, "so may the good ship arrive at her desired port in safety."

The eggs, from four to six in number, are greenish or bluish white, encircled at the thicker end with

irregular brown spots, and many blots of pale purple: they are rather round and obtuse in form. Meyer mentions one in the possession of Mr. Hancock, of Newcastle, marked all over with spots of a reddish and purple hue.

Male; length, about six inches and a half, or rather more, to six and three-quarters and seven inches; bill, yellow, brownish black at the tip—entirely yellow in summer; iris, chesnut brown. Head, on the back, pale yellowish brown, or chesnut—white in summer; crown, bright chesnut brown mixed with white, the tips of the feathers being reddish brown in winter: sometimes it is white. Neck, on the back, greyish brown—white in summer; in front a gorget of bright chesnut brown mixed with white; nape, white in summer, tinged with greyish or brownish red in winter; chin, white; throat, white, tinged with chesnut in winter; breast, white, with more or less yellowish brown on the sides—wholly white in summer. The feathers of the back black in summer, at other times deeply edged with greyish white, or pale yellowish, or reddish brown.

The wings extend to the width of one foot one inch. The first quill feather is the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, white; primaries, black, slightly edged with white—wholly black in summer. In some the first, and in others the second feather is the longest; secondaries, mostly white, but in younger birds black edged with white, and in adult birds some are black in summer; tertiaries, white. The tail has the two or three outer feathers white, with a dark streak along the shaft on the outer web some way down from the tip, and a small black spot near the tip; the rest blackish brown, edged with brownish white—pure black in summer; upper tail coverts, black, broadly margined with red-

dish brown in winter, or mingled tawny and white. Legs, toes, and claws, black, the hind one lengthened and nearly straight.

The female has the colours more dull with less white. Length, six inches and a quarter; bill, as in the male; iris, as in the male. The head on the sides and crown is very light chesnut brown; neck on the back, yellowish grey, the upper part with brownish grey instead of reddish margins; on the sides dark yellowish grey, in front dull chesnut brown in the form of a band, its edges on the sides streaked with dusky. Throat, pale yellowish grey; breast, light grey or greyish white, tinged on the sides with chesnut brown. The black on the back is not so pure as in the male bird, and the margins of the feathers are light yellowish brown.

The wings extend to the width of one foot and a quarter of an inch; lesser wing coverts, dusky, the first row tipped with dull white. The primaries have the white band tinged with dusky, and of much less extent, being only visible on seven of the quills; the secondaries have a large proportion of brownish black, and some white. Tail, brownish black, the two only of the side feathers being white, and it very dull; the next being only in general paler on the inner web; under tail coverts, greyish white.

The young, in the autumn, have the bill dull brownish yellow, darker at the point. Head on the sides, light chesnut brown, mixed with grey; crown, dark chesnut brown; neck on the back, light chesnut brown, mixed with grey, on the sides reddish brown; chin and throat, greyish white, tinged with reddish brown. The breast has a reddish brown band, edged at its sides with brownish black across its fore part; below it is greyish white. Back, mottled with brownish black and

reddish brown, the centre of each feather being of the former colour; lesser wing coverts, brownish white, with a central dusky streak; primaries, brownish black, edged with greyish white, white at the base, which colour extends on the inner web. Several of the secondaries are mostly white, but all of them have dusky or light brown towards the end: the three inner ones are without white, and mottled with brownish black and reddish brown. Tail, brownish black, edged with brownish grey; the three outer feathers almost entirely white, there being only a streak from the tip, including part of the outer web. Toes, brownish black.

This is a most variable species, especially in the male birds, the black being more or less intense, the white more or less extended, and the reddish brown both more or less extensive, and varying also in depth of tint. The bill is sometimes pure yellow, but in general tinged with brownish black or light brown at the tip, both above and below. Mr. Macgillivray mentions one which he shot in the year 1835, at the ever famous Preston Pans, in East Lothian, which was all over of a cream-colour, the head and upper tail coverts tinged with red, the eye light red, and the bill, feet, and claws, pale yellow.





ITALIAN BUNTING

## LAPLAND BUNTING.

LAPLAND LARK BUNTING.

LAPLAND FINCH. LAPLAND LONG-SPUR.

<i>Plectrophanes lapponica</i> ,	SELBY.
<i>Emberiza lapponica</i> ,	JENYNS.
<i>Emberiza calcarata</i> ,	TEMMINCK.
<i>Fringilla lapponica</i> ,	LINNÆUS. LATHAM.
<i>Fringilla calcarata</i> ,	PALLAS.
<i>Fringilla montana</i> ,	BRISSON.

*Plectrophanes.* *Plēctron*—A spur. *Phainō*—To shew.  
*Lapponica*—Of Lapland. *Lapponia*—Lapland.

THIS bird is a native both of Europe and Asia, being found along the Uralian chain of mountains which separate the two continents; and, in the former, in Siberia, Sweden, Lapland, Spitzbergen, the Ferroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, and a few so far south as Germany, France, Prussia, Poland, Silesia, and Switzerland. It occurs also in the Arctic portions of North America, and some stragglers are occasionally seen in the more southern parts of that portion of the continent.

In this country one was purchased some years ago in the London market; a second was taken on the Downs, near Brighton, in the county of Sussex; and a third in the same neighbourhood on the 30th. of September, 1844. A fourth was captured in September, 1828, a few miles north of London; a fifth was caught near



Preston, in Lancashire, in the month of October, in the year 1833, and a sixth was taken in a trap by a bird-catcher, near Kendal, in Westmoreland, at the end of June or beginning of July. It was either a female or a young male, as were all the other recorded specimens, excepting the second of those taken near Brighton.

The Lapland Bunting gives a natural preference to the sterile tracts of the north, where the whole scene is wild and desolate, and none but the most scanty vegetation clothes the mountainous and hilly prospect.

It moves southwards to avoid severe weather. It is said to be capable of being easily kept in confinement.

Its flight, when roused, is described as being quick and buoyant, but for the most part it is to be seen on the ground, where it runs along, holding its body, as do its relatives the Larks, in an inclined position, intent doubtless on the one great object of its daily life, the procuring its necessary food. If a bird of prey appears while it is on the wing, it alights and crouches close to the ground.

The food of this bird consists of the seeds of various Arctic and Alpine plants, especially, it is said, those of the willow and the Alpine arbutus, and also of insects.

The note is described by Meyer as sounding like the syllables 'itirr,' and 'twec;' and it utters it more while on the wing than when perched. In addition to these the male is reported to have a pleasing song.

The nest is placed on some small hillock in low marshy situations, among moss and stones, and is built of stems of grass, neatly and compactly lined with hair or feathers.

The eggs, usually six or seven in number, are pale yellow, spotted with brown.

Male; length, six inches and a half, and six and

three-quarters; bill, yellow, blackish at the tip; in the winter brownish yellow; from its base a narrow streak of white passes downwards, till it nearly joins that mentioned presently, which proceeds from above the eye. Iris, dark brown, or, according to Meyer, chesnut; a reddish or brownish white streak runs backwards from it, and then descends along the sides of the neck to the breast, where it joins the white of that part; it is palest near the bill. In the second Brighton specimen, as described by William Borrer, Esq., Jun., the bill was bluish red, excepting the tip, which was black. Forehead, crown, and back of the head, rich black, the feathers broadly edged with brownish red or greyish white after the autumnal moult; those at the base of the bill black; sides of the head reddish, spotted with black. Neck in front, black, deepest in summer; on the back light reddish brown, mixed with greyish in winter; nape, bright chesnut brown. Chin, throat, and breast above, black; the feathers strongly edged with greyish white in the winter after the autumnal moult; below dull white, streaked and spotted with blackish on the sides, which become brownish in the autumn. Back, bright chesnut brown and grey on the upper part, with blackish spots, on the remainder the feathers are dark brown, with reddish brown edges, and each feather is dusky along the shaft.

Greater and lesser wing coverts, blackish brown, with a broad margin of reddish, some of the latter tipped with white; primaries, blackish brown, edged with reddish white, with narrow light-coloured margins on the outer webs; the first is the longest; secondaries, blackish brown, edged with rust-colour or whitish; tertiaries, blackish brown, with a broad margin of reddish. The tail, which is forked, is blackish brown,

with reddish or greyish edges to the feathers, the two outer with a white wedge-shaped spot at the end of the inner web, and having the whole of the outer one of that colour; upper tail coverts, dark brown, the edges of the feathers reddish brown. Legs and toes, brownish black, or black, probably according to the season; claws, black, the hind claw nearly straight, and longer than the toe.

After the autumnal moult, when in the "transition state," the male resembles the female.

The female has the yellowish or reddish white stripe behind the eye duller than in the male, and it unites with a white line which proceeds from the corner of the bill. Head on the crown, and neck on the back, a mixture of reddish and black, the feathers edged with pale reddish brown and grey; on the lower part of the front and on the sides it is brownish grey, tinged with red in summer, and longitudinally streaked with blackish. Nape, chesnut brown, the feathers fringed with white; chin, greyish white; throat, white, or greyish white in summer; the white not so pure as in the male; bordered on the sides by a broad band. Breast, blackish above, the feathers edged with pale brown and grey; below it is whitish, with numerous grey and black spots, and longitudinal spots on the sides. There is a tinge of grey and a little red at the lower part.

Back, reddish grey, with black spots, as the head, on the upper part, and on the lower, whitish, tinged with grey, and a little red in summer. Tail, blackish brown, the outer edge and part of the inner web at the end of the side feathers, brownish white, of which there is a small oblique mark at the end of the second feather; under tail coverts, whitish, tinged with grey and a little red.

The young bird after the first moult, has the bill yellowish brown; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, dark brown, the feathers with light brown edges, giving it a streaked appearance; chin and throat, whitish with small longitudinal spots; breast, pale reddish or brownish white, spotted with darker brown on the lower part and sides; back, dark brown, the feathers with light brown edges; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, bordered with deep red. The tail has a reddish spot on the outer feather, and a longitudinal one on the next; legs, toes, and claws, light brown.

The young female has the bill yellowish brown; from its lower corner extends a streak of dark brown spots; over the eye is a broad streak of pale brown; head on sides, brown, partly mixed with black, as the crown; neck on the back, and nape, pale brown, tinged with yellowish grey, the shafts of the feathers blackish brown; in front the neck is dull white, with dusky streaks down the shafts of the feathers. Throat, yellowish white; breast, dull white, with dusky streaks down the shafts of the feathers. Greater wing coverts, blackish brown, deeply margined with chesnut brown, the tips white; primaries, dusky, with paler edges; secondaries, blackish brown, deeply margined with chesnut brown, the tips white; legs, toes, and claws, brown.

## BUNTING.

COMMON BUNTING. CORN BUNTING. BUNTING LARK.

*Emberiza miliaria*, PENNANT. MONTAGU. BEWICK.*Emberiza*—.....? *Miliaria*—A bird that feeds on millet.

THE bird before us is a native of Europe and Asia; in the former, in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, and southwards in Germany, Greece, and the Mediterranean, and in the latter in Asia Minor.

The Bunting is a common bird in most, though not in all, parts of the kingdom, frequenting the cultivated districts, and these almost exclusively, in Yorkshire, Shropshire, Sussex, Cornwall, Norfolk, Suffolk, Lancashire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Durham, and other counties; in Wales also, and in various parts of Scotland—Dumfriesshire, Edinburghshire, and Sutherlandshire, as also in the Orkneys, where it breeds; in the Hebrides and Shetland Islands. It is not, however, invariably to be found in plenty in situations in which it might be looked for in abundance, as in other similar ones, but is somewhat capricious in the choice of its localities.

It is believed to be in some degree migratory, and that our flocks are reinforced at the commencement of winter by others from the Continent; partial movements, at all events, take place in the winter.

Though seen only in pairs in the spring and summer, these birds associate in the autumn and winter



LUNTING.  
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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

months with others, both those of their own, though not numerous, and those of other species; a community of object producing a "communism" of habit—an ornithological "socialism," which may be defended on the most abstract and practical principles of right. "Corn-laws" and "Protection" have no place in their "statute book;" "free trade in corn" is the motto of the Bunting Lark; he has only regard to "home consumption," and ignores all "duties," save those which hunger dictates.

In that very pleasing volume, the "Journal of a Naturalist," Mr. Knapp says, "It could hardly be supposed that this bird, not larger than a Lark, is capable of doing serious injury; yet I this morning witnessed a rick of barley, standing in a detached field, entirely stripped of its thatching, which this Bunting effected by seizing the end of the straw, and deliberately drawing it out, to search for any grain the ear might contain; the base of the rick being entirely surrounded by the straw, one end resting on the ground, the other against the mow, as it slid down from the summit, and regularly placed, as if by the hand; and so completely was the thatching pulled off, that the immediate removal of the corn became necessary. The Sparrow and other birds burrow into the stack, and pilfer the corn, but the deliberate unroofing the edifice appears to be the habit of this Bunting alone."

They are rather, though by no means very shy birds, but frequently in the breeding-season and in the autumn sit close. They may sometimes be seen dusting themselves in the roads, like the Larks and Sparrows, and other birds. They also wash themselves; and may be kept in confinement.

The flight of the Bunting is heavy and strong, rather



undulated, performed by alternate beatings and cessations, and in some degree laboured, as if the wings were hardly equal, without exertion, to support the weight of the body. If suddenly disturbed, they fly off in a straight direction, with drooping legs, a constant flutter of the wings, and an audible 'whirr,' reminding one somewhat of the Partridge. At night they roost in bushes or hedges, and also on the ground, in stubble-fields. They move along the ground by hopping.

The food of the Corn Bunting consists of corn and such seeds as it meets with; beetles, such as cockchaffers, in their season, and other insects. It is consequently a good bird to eat, and, from its ponderous and bulky size, by no means despicable for the table; such at least I have found it at the "Grammar School of King Edward the Sixth," at which it was to be supposed that I received my education.

The note of the Bunting, which is uttered both when the bird is perched and on the wing, is harsh and unmusical, ordinarily only a 'chuck' or 'chit,' which, quickly run together and then protracted, form the staple of its song: it is heard at a considerable distance.

Nidification commences towards the end of April.

The nest, which is begun and finished in the course of this month, is usually placed on the ground, or only slightly raised above it by coarse herbage, and frequently on a bank, sometimes in a bush, or under a hedge, among the grass, is composed of small roots and dry straws and grasses, lined with smaller grasses, and small fibrous roots, moss, and hair, rather neatly, but not finely, compacted. It is somewhat large and thick, but shallow inside.

The eggs, generally four, or rarely five or six, in

number, and of an obtuse oval shape, are of a whitish colour, with a slight tinge of grey or red, sometimes pale purple red, streaked and spotted in a very irregular manner with dark purple brown and pale greyish purple. They differ a good deal in size, shape, and colour. In some the ground-colour is nearly white.

Male; weight, nearly two ounces; length, rather more than seven inches and a quarter, or seven and a half; Mr. Macgillivray has met with one over eight inches long; bill, short and thick, the upper one dark brown, excepting on the edges towards the base, which, as also the under one, is pale yellow brown. Its shape, as in the rest of the family, is very peculiar—the upper part is smaller than the lower, and fits closely into it when shut. Iris, dark brown; over it is a faint line of pale yellowish grey; head, crown, and neck on the back, pale yellowish brown, inclining to olive-colour, streaked with darker brown on the centre of each feather; in front, the latter has each feather tipped with a triangular spot of brownish black, the spots being larger and darker along a line on each side; nape, as the back of the neck. Chin, throat, and breast, dull whitish or yellowish brown—the latter colour in winter, the former in summer—marked on the sides with streaked spots of dark brown, which are more lengthened lower down; the shafts of the feathers being dusky; a gorget of small brown spots ~~passes~~ from the base of the bill, and so spreads over the breast. Back, pale yellowish brown, streaked with darker brown on the centre of each feather along the shaft; in autumn it assumes an olive tint.

The wings expand to the width of one foot one inch. In Mr. Macgillivray's specimen, spoken of above, the wings extended to the width of one foot one inch

and a half. Greater wing coverts, dark brown, broadly margined with pale brown; lesser wing coverts, the same, the first row tipped with light yellowish brown; primaries and secondaries, dark brown, the edges of the feathers lighter coloured; the first quill feather is a little shorter than the second, the second a little shorter than the third, which is the longest in the wing; the fourth a little shorter than the first; tertiaries, dark brown, broadly margined with pale brown. Tail, dark brown, the edges of the feathers lighter coloured—it is slightly forked, and rather long; upper tail coverts, pale brown, streaked with darker brown on the centre of each feather; under tail coverts, pale yellowish brown, dusky on the shafts. Legs, pale yellow brown, with a tinge of red; toes, dull yellow; claws, deep brown.

The female is not distinguishable in markings or colour from the male. Length, seven inches and a quarter. The wings expand to the width of one foot and three-quarters of an inch.

The young, when fully fledged, are nearly of the same colour as their parents; the upper parts lighter, the lower pale grey with dark oblong spots; after the first moult the colours deepen, but the young are still to be distinguished from the old by the dark markings being more lengthened.

Varieties are not very unfrequent, in which white more or less occurs. One has been met with almost entirely white. One is mentioned by my brother, Beverley R. Morris, Esq., M.D., in "The Naturalist," new series, vol. i., page 46, as having been met with at Pickering, on the 10th. of March, 1850, which was of a very pale straw-colour, with a few brown spots.

Mr. George Johnson, of Melton Ross, Lincolnshire, has one of these birds, he informs me, nearly white.





BLACK-HEADED BUNTING.

## BLACK-HEADED BUNTING.

REED BUNTING. WATER SPARROW. CHINK.  
 BLACK BONNET. PASSERINE BUNTING. MOUNTAIN  
 SPARROW.

<i>Emberiza schæniclus</i> ,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Emberiza passerina</i> ,	LATHAM.
<i>Emberiza schæniculus</i> ,	GOULD.
<i>Emberiza arundinacea</i> ,	Gmelin. LATHAM.
<i>Passer arundinaceus</i> ,	RAY.

*Emberiza*—.....?      *Schæniclus*—Some water bird,  
 probably from *Scoinos*—A rush.

On the continent of Europe this species is plentiful from Holland to Italy; and is found in summer in Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, arriving in April, and leaving again in September.

The Reed Bunting is common enough with us in the neighbourhood of water, whether that of the river, the stream, the lake, the marsh, or the pond; and is also at times met with in other and very dissimilar situations throughout England. Near Falmouth it is scarce; one was shot at Swanpool, on the 16th. of January, 1850. It occurs in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, as also in the Hebrides. In the Orkneys it has been occasionally met with; and in the summer of 1845, a pair were observed with a nest in a plantation at Muddisdale near Kirkwall.

In the winter these birds move, at least the majority, but not all of them, from the more northern parts in a southerly direction, quitting in September or October, and returning in March or April. They are sprightly, active, and elegant in their appearance, though they have no gay plumage to strike the eye of a casual observer. They are watchful and rather shy, but do not remove far when alarmed, quickly settling down again.

The present is another of the species of birds which display a strong instinctive solicitude for their young. In the "Magazine of Natural History," vol. viii., page 505, Mr. Salmon, of Thetford, writes, "Walking last spring among some rushes growing near a river, my attention was arrested by observing a Black-headed Bunting shuffling through the rushes, and trailing along the ground, as if one of her legs or wings were broken. I followed her to see the result; and she having led me to some considerable distance, took wing; no doubt much rejoiced on return to find her stratagems had been successful in preserving her young brood; although not in preventing the discovery of her nest, containing five young ones, which I found was placed, as usual, on the side of a hassock, or clump of grass, and almost screened from view by overhanging dead grass." They may be kept in captivity: I have seen one in a large aviary with a number of other birds of various species, but it was by far the most wild of any of them.

In the winter months they gather in small flocks or assemblages, which disperse again to their various "country quarters" towards the end of March.

Their flight is tolerably even and rather rapid, performed in a rather undulated line, the wings being opened and shut from time to time. Meyer points out how, when roused from their nests by any one walking

through their haunts, they spring up and cling to the slender stems of the osiers or reeds, flitting anxiously from one to another; and that they sit in a very upright position, swinging upon the weak sprays, which their light weight causes to bend under them, and continually expanding and closing the feathers of their tails by a very quick side motion; the white of which they also display, when abruptly alighting, as is their wont.

Their food consists of insects, and the seeds of reeds and other aquatic plants.

The note is rendered by Meyer by the word 'sherrip' pronounced quickly; a mere chirp of two notes, the first repeated three or four times, the last single and more sharp. It is heard at tolerably frequent intervals; the bird in the mean time perched on some small twig, and remaining in a listless sort of attitude.

The nest is commonly placed on the ground, among coarse grass, weeds, sedge, or rushes, on a bank near the edge of the water which the bird frequents, and occasionally in the lower part of some low bush or stump, a few inches above the ground; sometimes it is said to have been met with in a furze or gorse bush, at a considerable distance from water; and Mr. Hewitson relates that he has, though rarely, found it at an elevation of two feet or more above the water, and supported on a mass of fallen reeds. It is composed of grasses and fragments of rushes, lined with the down of the reed, a little moss, or finer grass, or hair.

The eggs are four or five in number, of a pale purple brown, greenish, or brownish, or purple white colour, streaked and strongly spotted in a pleasing manner with a darker shade of the same; sometimes the end is delicately marked with a texture of fine lines. They



are laid about the first week in May, and occasionally a second brood is produced in July. They are oblong, and taper at each end.

Male; length, six inches and a quarter; bill, dusky brown above, paler beneath; a white streak passes from its corner backwards, meeting the white collar presently mentioned; iris, dark brown; when excited, the bird raises up the feathers on the top of the head. Head on the crown and sides, velvet black, bounded by a collar of white, which descends to the breast; the black feathers assume reddish brown tips after the autumnal moult, until the following spring, and the collar becomes greyish white. Neck on the back and nape, black, excepting the white collar, and broadly edged with rusty brown after the autumnal moult, all the colours being then obscured together; chin and throat, black, ending in a point tending downwards; after the autumnal moult the feathers are tipped with greyish brown until the following spring; breast, dull bluish grey white, darkest on the sides, where it is also streaked with brown. The feathers of the back are blackish, bordered with rufous brown, interspersed with grey, which latter colour prevails lower down, the shafts of the feathers being blackish.

The wings expand to the width of nine inches and three-quarters; greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky black, each feather being broadly margined with rufous; primaries, dusky black, margined with rufous; the first four quill feathers are nearly equal in length, but the second is rather the longest, the fifth, according to Yarrell, shorter than the first, but Macgillivray says that they are equal; secondaries, dusky black; tertiaries, dusky black on the inner web, reddish on the outer, and margined with white. The tail is rather long and

slightly forked; the two outer feathers on each side are white, with an oblique dusky brown patch at the base and tip, the shafts black; the middle pair are dark brown, slightly margined with rufous, the others blackish brown; upper tail coverts, bluish grey streaked with blackish, the shafts being of that colour; under tail coverts, white. Legs, toes, and claws, dusky brown.

The female is rather less in size than the male. Length, five inches and a half; from the base of the bill extends a brown streak, joining a patch of that colour under the neck, and spreading over the breast in dusky spots. Iris, dusky brown; over it is a pale yellowish or reddish grey streak, which meets that on the back of the neck. Head and crown, dusky reddish or yellowish brown, varied with darker brown on the centre of the feathers; there is a band of pale yellowish or reddish grey round the back of the neck, which in front is of the same colour, with two irregular bands of blackish brown. On each side of the chin descends a streak of dark brown; throat and breast, dull white, more clouded with greyish brown than in the male, and streaked with dark reddish brown; back, dusky, bordered with rusty brown. Greater and lesser wing coverts, broadly edged with rufous; tertiaries, broadly edged with rufous; upper tail coverts, pale greyish brown tinged with red. Legs, toes, and claws, pale brown.

The young birds resemble the female, but with duller tints, and the sides of the head of a brownish grey colour. The black on the head is assumed by the young males in the following spring after their first autumn, and the white ring is not so conspicuous as in older birds; the bill is a bluish red colour, and the legs the same; the eye as in the adult bird.

A pied variety of this species, a male, was met with in the year 1850, at Longhirst, in Northumberland. It was beautifully mottled with black, brown, and white, but white was the predominant colour.





YELLOW-HAMMER.

## YELLOW-HAMMER.

YELLOW BUNTING. YELLOW YOWLEY.

YELLOW YELDRING. YELLOW YOLDRING. YELLOW YITE.

YELDRICK. YOLKRING. YOIT. SKITE. GOLDIE.

*Emberiza citrinella*,  
*Emberiza flava*,PENNANT. MONTAGU.  
BRISSON.*Emberiza*—.....? *Citrinella*. *Citrus*—A citron or  
lemon tree?

THE Yellow-hammer is found throughout the European continent, from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, to the shores of the Mediterranean. It is, however, most plentiful in the midland parts—decreasing in numbers towards the north and south extremities.

This is one of the most common birds that we have in this country, and is more particularly observable in the summer time, when there is not a hedge alongside of which you can walk, without seeing one after another flitting out before you, and then in again, "here and there, and everywhere." The nest is, or is to be, some where near, and hence the greater apparent frequency of the Yellow-hammer at this season. In the winter they are more collected together in flocks. They frequent, for the most part, the cultivated districts, those that are destitute of wood being uncongenial to them, but they are found on such wastes as are covered with gorse or broom.

In Orkney this species is by no means plentiful, and is chiefly observed in winter: the same remark applies to Shetland. During the summer of 1846, a pair built their nest in the garden at Daisy Bank, near Kirkwall; and another pair bred the same season at Pabdale.

Yellow-hammers are gregarious birds, consorting in the winter months with flocks of other species, as well as of their own. They roost generally on the ground, and you may see them in the dusk of the evening, when they are retiring to rest, flitting about in numbers on the sides of banks, disturbed by your approach. In very cold weather they are said to seek for the night the shelter of bushes, ivy, and shrubs, as a protection against the "cauld blast," which the houseless and homeless wanderer instinctively shrinks from encountering on the wide heath, the solitary moor, or the lonely road; when it is a

"Winter's evening,  
And fast falls down the snow."

The male bird is carefully attentive to the female when engaged during the period of incubation with her maternal duties, brings her food, and takes his turn in sitting upon the eggs. They have a habit, when perched, of flirting the tail up and down, when it is also slightly expanded. Both shew much affection for their young, and in many cases, if not in all, the parent birds keep in company throughout the winter, frequently with their family also. Even when large flocks are collected together in hard weather, it is very probable that the members of the different families are still united to each other in some degree, and so continue until in the following season they disperse to become the

several heads of families themselves. Like others of their tribe, these birds occasionally dust themselves in the roads, and at such times, and indeed frequently at others, may be approached quite closely. They are reckoned good eating, and great quantities are taken on the continent for the purpose. Meyer possessed one which continued for several weeks to feed a young Cuckoo, which had been placed in the same cage in which it was kept; and it did this, not with that food which it took by choice itself, but with that which was most congenial to the voracious appetite of its adopted child.

Their flight is strong, quick, and undulated, and they alight suddenly and unexpectedly, displaying the feathers of the tail at the time. They move along the ground, when feeding, by a series of very short leaps, in a horizontal position, with the breast nearly touching the ground. When perched, the tail is much deflected, hanging down as if the bird were listless, and this attitude is often continued for some time.

Their food consists of grain and other seeds, and occasionally, but rarely, of insects and worms. They consume a considerable quantity of corn in the farm-yard, clinging on to the outside of the stack, and frequently pulling out the long straws, winnowing the ears, and devouring the grain either on the spot, or at some little distance to which they have flown with it.

The note, which may be heard so early as February, is usually two or more chirps, followed by a harsher one in a higher key, 'chit, chit, chirr,' and these at rather lengthened intervals. The bird generally utters it when perched on the outer or topmost spray or bough of a hedge or a tree. When a large flock is disturbed in winter from a farm-yard, and alight in a body on



any neighbouring trees, a great clamour is sometimes raised, and the twittering continued for a considerable time, as if all the individuals were holding a 'conversation' together, and each wished to have his say on the subject, which, however interesting to them it may be, is a puzzle to the ornithologist even to guess the purport of; all on a sudden a few, first one and then another, glide down again from the trees, followed presently by the whole party; the conversation is over, the forage recommenced, the association in the mind which recalled some long since "by-gone hour," is dispelled, and conjecture as to the meaning of the language just heard, is left in its previous uncertainty. Meyer relates of a tame Yellow-hammer which he had, that it displayed considerable powers of ventriloquism.

Towards the beginning of April, the associations of winter are broken up, and those of summer are made.

The nest, which is rather bulky, is usually placed either on or very near to the ground, on a bank, or sheltered by some bush, among the twigs, or in a clump of grass, or tuft of other herbage. The late William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, knew one in the middle of a field; he also relates that in the garden of a friend of his near Belfast, a pair of these birds built their nest at the edge of a gravel walk, and brought out four young, three of which being destroyed, the nest was removed with the fourth one for greater safety to a bank a few feet distant, and the old birds still kept to it, and completed the education of their last nestling. The nest is formed of moss, small roots, small sticks, and hair, tolerably well compacted together; the finer parts of the materials being of course inside. Mr. Blackwall mentions in the first volume of the "Zoological Journal," his having known an instance in which, in the month

of June, the female laid her eggs upon the bare ground, sat upon and hatched them; and Mr. Salmon, of Thetford, mentions in the second volume of the "Naturalist," old series, page 274, his having on one occasion, on the 29th. of May, 1834, found the nest at the height of seven feet from the ground, in a broom tree. Mr. Hewitson too, found one at a height of six feet from the ground in a spruce fir.

The eggs, from three to four or five, and occasionally six in number, are of a pale purple white colour, streaked and speckled with dark reddish brown; the streaks frequently ending in spots of the same colour. Some have been known of a red colour, with reddish brown streaks and lines, others quite white, others entirely of a stone-colour, and others again of a stone-colour, marbled in the usual way. In a nest in which was one egg of the ordinary size, there were two others of the Lilliputian dimensions of those of the Golden-crested Wren. The young are seldom able to fly before the second week in June, being about a fortnight after they have been hatched; they keep together at night for a short time before they finally separate. Two broods are occasionally reared in the year.

The male is very variable in the tints of his plumage, the yellow being in some much more extended than in others; this is the case with older birds, in whom also it is of a paler hue: in some the red on the breast and lower part of the back is more or less deep than in others. Weight, about seven drachms; length, seven inches, or a trifle over; bill, bluish horn-colour, the upper one with a tinge of brown; iris, dark brown; about the base of the bill the feathers are terminated with short bristles. Head on the crown and sides, bright yellow, with a few streaks of dusky black and

olive brown, frequently forming a line on each side from the forehead over the eye to the back of the head; neck on the back and nape, the same; chin, throat, and breast, bright yellow, the latter clouded and more or less streaked on the sides with reddish brown and olive-colour; back, on the upper part, bright reddish brown with a tinge of yellow, yellowish orange, or yellowish green, each feather being dark brown in the centre; on the lower part it is orange brown, the feathers margined with greyish white or yellowish, according to the season.

The wings extend to the width of eleven inches; underneath they are grey; greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky black, broadly margined with rich chesnut brown and olive; primaries, dusky black, with a narrow outside edge of yellow; the first four nearly equal in length, but the first, or according to Macgillivray, the third, rather the longest, the fourth a little shorter than the third, and the fifth a quarter of an inch shorter than the fourth; secondaries and tertiaries, dusky black, broadly margined with rich chesnut brown and olive; greater and lesser under wing coverts, yellow. The tail is slightly forked, having the two middle feathers shorter than the rest, and dusky black, edged with reddish brown, and tinged with yellow; the next three feathers on each side are dusky black edged with olive, and the two outer ones on each side have a broad patch of white in a slanting direction on the inner web, the rest of the feather pale brown, and the outer margin yellowish white; underneath, the tail is grey; upper tail coverts, reddish brown, the feathers edged with yellow. Legs, toes, and claws, light yellow-brown, with a tinge of red.

The female is in general much duller in colour; length,

not quite seven inches; the head has much less yellow than in the male, that colour being nearly confined to the fore part of it; the neck in front assumes a tinge of dull green; the breast has the yellow much more obscured, and is merely streaked on the sides and front with yellowish red; back, on the lower part, lighter than in the male. The wings expand to the width of ten inches and three-quarters; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, paler than in the male. The white spots on the side feathers of the tail are smaller in size than in the male bird, and the whole of the tail is of a lighter tint.

The young, when first fledged, are dull yellowish brown, streaked with black above, yellowish grey beneath, the breast and sides streaked with brown. The head does not assume the yellow until after the first autumnal moult, and is patched with dusky black, each feather having a streak of that colour—the older the bird the more is the yellow diffused, and less interrupted with the dusky streaks, as also deeper in tint; the sides of the head are yellowish grey. Neck on the sides, yellowish grey, on the lower part in front dull yellowish brown streaked with dusky; throat, yellow; breast, dull yellowish streaked with dusky. The streaks on the back are much broader than in the adult, and the red on its lower part is less pure, most of the feathers being streaked on the centre. The quill feathers of the wings have the yellow margins less bright; the white spots on the side feathers of the tail are smaller even than in the female; under tail coverts, dusky in the centre.

Varieties occasionally occur—one has been seen in which the head, neck, and throat were pure white, with a few spots of brown on the top of the head. Montagu mentions one he had, in which the white of the head

neck, and lower part of the back, as also the whole of the breast, were pale yellow, and some of the quill feathers, and of those on the shoulders, white. Mr. Macgillivray records another, shot in the county of Linlithgow, of a greyish white colour, the margins of the feathers pale brownish red, the bill and feet pale.





CIRLE BUNTING.

## CIRL BUNTING.

FRENCH YELLOW-HAMMER. BLACK-THROATED  
YELLOW-HAMMER.

<i>Emberiza cirlus</i> ,	PENNANT. MONTAGU. BEWICK.
<i>Emberiza elcathorax</i> ,	BECHSTEIN.

*Emberiza*—.....?      *Cirlus*—.....?

THIS neat bird is abundant in the southern parts of the European continent, and occurs also in Asia Minor; in the former in Germany, Switzerland, Thuringia, and along the shores of the Mediterranean, also in Crete and Corfu, and in France, but in the latter only, it is said, when 'en route.'

In Yorkshire, Mr. Allis has recorded one taken near York, and Dr. Neville Wood another obtained in the year 1837, at Campsall, near Doncaster; a third was shot by T. Strangways, Esq., at the Leases near Bedale, in the North-Riding, on the 5th. of February, 1851; and a fourth by Richard Strangways, Esq., also in the month of February, near St. Agatha's Abbey, Richmond, Yorkshire; the same gentleman saw two others, both males, on the 29th. of December, 1850, on Askew moor, near Bedale. In Berkshire, I myself procured one in the grounds of East Garston vicarage, near Lambourne: this was in the summer of the year 1826, or 1827; there were a pair, and my attention was first directed to them by the peculiarity of their



note, uttered from the top of an elm tree, which struck me as something different from anything I had heard before, there being a peculiar sharpness in it: I also procured their nest and two eggs. In Dorsetshire, some years afterwards, I shot another out of a flock of Yellow-hammers, in a field bordered by the sea-shore, near the village of Charmouth. In Hampshire, it has been met with in plenty, in the Isle of Wight, also near Alton and the neighbouring parish of Selborne, with which the name of WHITE will ever be associated; Thomas Bell, Esq. has known them to breed there in the year 1847. In Surrey, near Godalming, though rarely; Wiltshire and Devonshire, where it was first discovered, in considerable plenty, by Colonel Montagu, in the neighbourhood of Kingsbridge, in the winter of the year 1800. In the adjoining county of Cornwall, W. P. Cocks, Esq. records in "The Naturalist," vol. i., page 112, that it is not uncommon in the neighbourhood of Falmouth; it occurs also near St. Germans, Penzance, and Penryn. It is taken occasionally in the neighbourhood of London; in Sussex, near Rye, where J. B. Ellman, Esq. shot one in April, 1849; and near Chichester, where Mr. Gould observed it in abundance.

A. E. Knox, Esq. says that it affects the neighbourhood of the coast, seldom venturing many miles into the interior; that it is common during the summer months near Chichester, Bognor, Worthing, and Brighton, but is not met with on the northern side of the Downs of West Sussex. William Knapp, Esq., of Harts Cottage, Alveston, near Bristol, records in the "Zoologist," page 3174, that it is a constant resident in that part of Gloucestershire throughout the year, breeding there in the summer; also near Bridgewater,

Glastonbury, Bath, and Bristol. In the adjoining county of Somerset he also relates that he has long known it to be abundant in the winter. In Norfolk it appears to be very rare; J. H. Gurney, Esq., of Easton, has known one killed in that county in the beginning of November, 1849. In Scotland one was procured near Edinburgh.

There is no mention of the occurrence of this bird so far north as the Orkneys, in the Natural History of those islands, before referred to, published by W. B. Baillie, Esq., M. D., and Mr. Heddle.

The following is a certain author's theory of the distribution of this species:—"The whole plumage is indeed more soft and loose, and less fitted for contending with the winds than that of the other Buntings, and much more so than that of the species which breeds in the distant north." "As these birds fly much in company with the Yellow Buntings in winter, they might be looked for in warmer places a little farther to the north than they have hitherto been found; though as they are in a great measure corn-land birds in their habits, the sheep-walks on the southern heights may impede their progress to the countries farther to the north, and they cannot be expected on the mountains."

These birds may be easily kept, if brought up from the nest. They seem to be rather more shy than the Yellow Buntings, and are fond of perching on the summits of trees: as recorded of the other species, they also feign lameness, to entice strangers from a too near approach to their nest. They seem to have a partiality for elm trees, in preference to any others; but if the present mania for cutting down hedge-row timber continues, under the plea of "agricultural improvement," we bid fair to have neither elm trees, nor any other trees

left for a bird to perch on; and what will become of the most beautiful feature of the English landscape?

They feed principally on berries, seeds, and grain, and also on caterpillars, beetles, and other insects.

The note is generally delivered from the top of a tall tree, and the female is more deficient in vocal powers than the male, though neither of them excel in this respect. They continue in full song, such as it is, until the middle or end of August, or until the period of the autumnal moult, which takes place about that time. Their monotonous lay is reiterated at brief intervals, and is uttered, at least a portion of it, while on the wing, as well as when perched.

The Cirl Buntings pair in April, and nidification commences about the beginning of May.

The nest is placed in furze or low bushes, and is usually made of dry stalks of grass and a little moss, lined with hair and small roots; some are wholly without moss or hair, and are composed entirely of the other materials, the small roots constituting the lining. R. A. Julian, Esq., Jun., has known one, containing four eggs, which he met with in July, 1850, in a steep bank: it may have been a second one of the year.

The eggs are four or five in number, of a dull bluish white, distinctly streaked and speckled with dark brown: they vary much in colour and markings. The young are hatched in about a fortnight.

Male; weight, about seven drachms; length, six inches and not quite a half; bill, bluish lead-colour above, paler beneath; iris, dark brown: over it is a patch or streak of bright yellow, coming round and forming a gorget beneath the black on the throat, and a dark streak of blackish green passes, as it were, through it from the lower bill. The head has a yellow

spot on its side; crown, dark olive, streaked with black on the centres of the feathers; the black feathers of the head have lighter-coloured margins in the winter, making the head yellowish grey, with the centres of the feathers black; neck on the back, sides, and front on the lower part, yellowish grey, inclining to olive green; nape, olive green; chin and throat, black with a tinge of green, below which is a crescent-shaped patch of bright yellow, the ends of which turn upwards towards the sides of the head: in the winter the black of the throat has lighter-coloured margins. Breast on the upper part, dull olive, met below by a chesnut brown band, which is widest on the sides, which are further tinged with the same, and streaked with dusky black: the lower part of the breast is dull yellow. Back, fine chesnut brown, the edge of the feathers tinged with olive, at some seasons with greyish white, and dusky in the centre and on the shafts.

The wings extend to within an inch and a half of the end of the tail; underneath they are yellowish; greater wing coverts, dusky, black in the centre, broadly margined with chesnut brown; lesser wing coverts, olive green; primaries and secondaries, dusky black, with very narrow yellowish or yellowish green edges; the second and third quill feathers are equal in length, and the longest in the wing; the first and fourth are also equal in length, but a little shorter than the second and third; the fifth, eighth of an inch shorter than the fourth; Macgillivray describes the three first as being nearly equal in length. Tertiaries, dusky black in the centre, broadly margined with chesnut brown. Tail, dusky black; the two outer feathers on each side have a patch of white on the inner webs, extending half-way from the tip, the external edge of the outer

one entirely white; the centre pair are rather shorter than the others, and tinged with reddish or chesnut brown; the rest black, with very narrow light-coloured edges; upper tail coverts, yellowish olive, streaked with dusky grey; under tail coverts, pale yellow. Legs and toes, light brown tinged with pale red; claws, dusky.

In the female, over the eye is a dull yellow streak, passing down the side of the head; the head is without the black colour and the bright yellow: it is dull green, with marks of a darker shade. The crown is streaked with black; chin, yellowish brown, streaked with darker brown, as is the throat, both being without the bright yellow; breast, dull yellow, streaked with dusky black: the back is streaked with black. Its general colour is not so bright as in the male bird.

The young before the first moult have the breast pale yellow, streaked with dusky: as the bird advances in age, an olive tint appears, increasing gradually in depth of colour. Back, light brown, speckled with black.





ORTOLAN.  
300

## ORTOLAN.

## ORTOLAN BUNTING.

<i>Emberiza hortulana</i> ,	LINNÆUS. LATHAM.
“ “	SELBY. JENYNS. GOULD.
<i>Emberiza chlorocephala</i> ,	MONTAGU. BEWICK.
<i>Emberiza Tunstalli</i> ,	LATHAM.

*Emberiza* —.....?      *Hortulana*—Of, or pertaining to  
gardens.      *Hortus*—A garden.

THIS is an abundant species in many parts of the European continent, and is found also in plenty on the northern shores of Africa, as well as in Asia Minor, Central Asia, and the East Indies. In Europe, it occurs plentifully in France, Spain, and the other southern countries that border on the Mediterranean, occasionally in Holland, and also in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, where it even produces its young; and in Lapland.

A specimen of this bird was taken off the Yorkshire coast, in the month of May, 1822, by the master of a merchant vessel; Bewick says that about the same time a pair were seen in the garden at Cherry-burn, on the banks of the Tyne. Another possessed by Marmaduke Tunstal Esq., had been taken some time previously, in St. Mary-la-bonne Fields, London, by a bird-catcher; a third was killed near Manchester, in November, 1827; and a fourth was caught near London, in company with Yellow Buntings, by another member of the above-



named fraternity. 'La mala compagnia è quella che mena uomini alla furca;' 'Bad company leads to the gallows,' says the Italian proverb, and the Ortolan Bunting is not the first that has experienced the truth of it. In the "Account of the Birds found in Norfolk," by John Henry Gurney and William Richard Fisher, Esqrs., one is mentioned as having been seen by them, which was said to have been killed near Norwich. One is also recorded by Edward Hearle Rodd, Esq., of Trebartha Hall, in the "Zoologist," page 3277, as having been obtained at Trescoe, one of the Scilly Islands, on or about the 8th. of October, 1851. One was shot on the 27th. of April in the present year, 1852, close to the town of Worthing, in Sussex, about a couple of hundred yards from the sea. For this information I am indebted to W. F. W. Bird, Esq., who had it from Mr. Cooper, of Radnor-Street, London.

Meyer says of these birds that they prefer the borders of woods, hedges, and fields, especially if near water; that they also visit gardens, and frequent the banks of rivulets clothed with low willows and other bushes, and districts intersected with ditches and marshy tracts; and that from their wooded retreats they visit the neighbouring fields of stubble, turnips, and millet, but are seldom seen in open meadows. He adds that they are said to shew themselves but little, in which respect they differ from the others of their kind that are found in this country, which are all of them remarkable for perching in exposed situations, where they are easily visible.

Great numbers of Ortolans are captured in nets, and preserved for the table, being esteemed a great delicacy by the foreign 'gourmands.' They are kept most easily in captivity, and being supplied abundantly

with food, pass almost their whole time in feeding, so that they unwittingly hasten on their destruction by the same means as, although in a different way from, some notorious glutton, of whom it was said that he committed suicide with his teeth: it would be well, if such a habit were confined to the birds, and were shared in common with them by none who rank higher in the scale of nature. Even in the time of the Romans, that is to say, in their later times, when their luxuriousness and effeminacy necessitated the destruction of the empire, they too thus committed political suicide: the Ortolan was valued on the same account that has rendered it an object of quest ever since.

It is a migratory species, Africa being its winter, and Europe its summer residence. Bechstein remarks that its migration is so exact and regular, that when one has been seen in a particular spot, especially in the spring, it is sure to be found there the following year at the same time. This is, however, equally the case with many other migratory birds, as well as with the one at present before us. The rule is, I think, one way, although there may be exceptions to it,

The food of this bird consists of grain and seeds, as also of insects and their larvæ, on which latter the young are principally fed, as is the case with other birds of allied kinds.

The monotonous note of this species is almost incessantly repeated by the male bird during the pairing season. As a cage bird, Bechstein describes its song as full and clear.

The Ortolan Bunting begins to build early in May.

The nest is placed in corn-fields, and adapted to some hollow in the ground, or the latter possibly to it; Selby adds thickets and low hedges as places of

its nidification also. It is formed of dry grass and small roots, thickly lined with the finer portions of the latter; in some the inside is finished with a few hairs.

The eggs are four or five, sometimes, though rarely, six in number: they vary much in markings.

Male, length, six inches and a quarter; bill, reddish brown: from its lower corner descends a short streak of yellow, between which and the yellow of the chin is a narrow band of greenish grey. Iris, brown; head on the crown and sides, greenish grey, the shafts of the feathers dark-coloured; neck on the back, the same; nape, the same; chin, throat, and breast on the upper part, yellowish green, the remainder of the latter is reddish buff, the feathers tipped with greyish white; back on the upper part, rich reddish brown, or yellowish brown, with a tinge of green on the edges of the feathers, but almost black in the middle; on the lower part it is reddish, or yellowish brown.

The wings have the first three feathers nearly equal in length and the longest in the wing, the fourth nearly a quarter of an inch shorter than the third; greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky black, with broad rufous brown margins, which at some seasons are yellowish white; primaries, dusky black, narrowly edged with rufous brown, at some seasons with yellowish white; secondaries, dusky black, also edged with rufous brown; tertiaries, dusky black, with broad rufous brown margins. Tail, dusky black, the centre feathers tinted with reddish, and their margins paler; the two outer feathers on each side with a patch of white on the inner web; upper tail coverts, reddish or yellowish brown; under tail coverts, pale reddish buff. Legs and toes, pale brown, with a tinge of red: the hind claw is not much curved.

The female is generally of a duller hue, and is also rather smaller in size; the colour of the head is more mixed with grey, and streaked with dark brown. The breast on the upper part is spotted with dark brown, and the buff on the lower part is less bright in colour.

Young birds of the year resemble the female.

M. Temminck and M. Vieillot speak of different varieties of this bird. The latter enumerates six different ones: one of them has the head and neck green. Some, he says, are occasionally met with entirely white, and others partially so; others, again, of a uniform blackish brown, but this the result of their being fed on hemp seed when kept in confinement.

## CHAFFINCH.

SHILFA. SCOBBY. SHELLY. SKELLY.

SHELL-APPLE. BEECH-FINCH. TWINK. SPINK. PINK.

*Fringilla cœlebs*,

PENNANT. MONTAGU. BEWICK.

*Fringilla*, also *Frigilla*—A Chaffinch. *Cœlebs*—A Bachelor.

THIS bird is generally distributed over the European continent, being migratory in those countries which are colder, and stationary in those which are warmer. It is found from the Levant to the Azores, and from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden to the "Banks of the Blue Moselle," and all the other regions of the "sunny south." It occurs also on the northern shores of Africa.

In this country it is one of our most common species, and the male one of the handsomest birds that we have, as will appear from the description.

In the Orkney Islands it is very common in winter and spring, and most likely breeds there, as several remain throughout the summer. Large flocks occasionally appear in October, especially after easterly gales.

The Chaffinch is with us in some degree migratory, and is remarkable for the separation, in some parts of the country, of the males and females, during the winter months, and their collection at that season into separate flocks. Mr. Selby, speaking of this singular habit says, that in the county of Northumberland, and in Scotland,



CHALCOPHAPS.  
OR

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses.

2. The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses.

3. The third part of the document is a list of names and addresses.

their separation takes place about the month of November; and that from that period till the return of spring, few females are to be seen, and those few always in distinct societies. The males remain, and are met with, during the winter, in immense flocks, feeding with other granivorous birds in the stubble lands as long as the weather continues mild, and the ground free from snow; resorting, upon the approach of winter, to farmyards, and other places of refuge and supply. He adds that it has been noticed by several authors that the arrival of the males, in a number of our summer visitors, precedes that of the females by many days; a fact from which we might infer that in such species a similar separation exists between the males and the females before their migration. When at school, at Broomsgrove, in Worcestershire, I noticed this fact, I mean as regards the Chaffinch, myself. There the hen birds used to be met with in large flocks in the winter months, and also, I am nearly certain, the male birds likewise in flocks by themselves. I am inclined to think that this is most the case in severe winters.

The Rev. Gilbert White, in his "Natural History of Selborne," Hampshire, remarked the same thing, the large flocks to be met with in hard weather being almost, but not quite, exclusively composed of females. Linnæus, in his "Fauna of Sweden," records his observation of the like circumstance there, and says that the female Chaffinches migrate from that country in the winter, but that the males do not. Hence the assignment by him to this species of its specific Latin name, equivalent to our Bachelor.

With the advance of spring, however, our bird becomes "Cælebs in search of a wife;" nor does he seek in vain, for in every lane in the country that is lined with trees,



a "happy pair" are to be seen; the absurdities of Malthus and Miss Martineau—to whom I wish no worse than that she may remain to the end of her days in "Single Blessedness"—weighing not a feather in the scale with them against the Divine Edict which Nature publishes to them, "Encrease and multiply." With regard, however, to the observations of Linnæus, Professor Nillson, of Sweden, says that although but few Chaffinches remain in that country during winter, they are not males only. But, doubtless, the fact as stated by the former great author, must still remain, at all events to some degree, the same as when he recorded it, and this would partially account for the enlarged numbers of females to be seen with us in winter in the flocks already spoken of.

In autumn these birds become gregarious, frequenting hedge-rows and stubble fields, where they unite with companions of various other species, whose similar pursuits lead them to the like localities. Still later on in the year they assemble in stack-yards, and are to be met with in every direction, searching for food, in orchards, gardens, and fields, by hedge-row sides, along open roads, in copses and woods, and near houses. Towards the end of March the flocks break up, and in April preparations for an addition of family are made. Mr. Knapp, the author of the "Journal of a Naturalist," says that in Gloucestershire no separation of the kind above spoken of takes place in the winter.

The Chaffinch is considered to act the useful part of a sentinel for other birds, by uttering a note of alarm, and so giving them timely notice of approaching danger. No bird is also more ready to join with others in mobbing any unwelcome intruder, whether in the shape of cat or weasel, owl or cuckoo; nor is any more

neat in personal characteristics. Even in the depth of winter, when the pools are covered with ice, he may be seen washing in some place that affords a lavatory to him, and then he flies off to some neighbouring branch, where he preens and dries his feathers. It is a sprightly species, and confident in behaviour, allowing often the very near advance of observers or passers by, without exhibiting much alarm. The male bird, when not at rest, usually raises the feathers of the head to a trifling extent in the way of a crest.

Their flight, which on occasion is protracted, is rather rapid and somewhat undulated, being performed by quickly-repeated flappings, with short intervals of cessation. Their movement from the ground to a tree, when disturbed by your too near approach, is singularly quick—an upward dart, executed with scarce any apparent effort. They alight also in an abrupt manner, and when on the ground proceed by a succession of very short leaps. They roost at night in thick hedge-rows, as also among evergreens in plantations and shrubberies.

The food of the Chaffinch consists of grain, seeds, and the tender leaves of young plants, as also of insects; and these latter it may sometimes, especially in the early months of the spring, be seen hawking after for a little way, somewhat after the manner of the Fly-catcher. I copy the following pleasing and complete account of this part of the Natural History of our present subject, from a paper in the "Zoologist," pages 297-298, by Archibald Hepburn, Esq.; only first observing that these birds also swallow small round smooth grains of gravel, to aid the process of digestion:—"The ploughing of our stubble-fields is generally finished about the end of December. Those which have been sown out with grass seeds may still afford a slight

supply of food, but it is then that the great body of Chaffinches seek shelter near the homestead, gleaning their food in the cattle-yards, at the barn-door, on the sides and round about the stacks. Here, 'as in the fields, they are distinguished for their watchfulness, and well do the little birds know the import of their warning note. The Dipper may be heard by the mountain stream the livelong year, and the bold Missel Thrush may stir the woodlands in sunny hours, even in mid-winter; here the Robin and the Wren are silent during the dead season, and the Chaffinch is the leader of the vernal chorus.

When the oats are sown in March, many small flocks betake themselves to the fields, feeding on the uncovered grains, and such small seeds as may be turned up in the course of tillage. Even our sheltered woods on the banks of Whittingham-Water are seldom altogether deserted; for the autumn leaves, when swept aside by the blast, seem to disclose a multitude of small seeds congenial to their taste. As the season advances, these flocks gradually disperse, and none remain about the farm-yards but such as breed in the garden and neighbouring hedge-rows; and they may daily be seen foraging for a supply of their winter fare, even in midsummer, but desist entirely from pilfering from the sides of the stacks; even the new-fledged young partake of such food. During the summer months, insects and their larvæ constitute their chief support, perhaps I might almost say, in many cases, their only support, for they are often found in the loneliest places in woods and plantations.

The first annoyance they give to the farmer is by destroying his early crops of radishes, turnips, and onions, in the garden, besides making sad havoc with

his polyanthuses and auriculas; but a few barn-door fowls feathers inserted into a piece of cork, and allowed to dangle in the wind over the beds, are sure to drive away our merry little songster, who does our apple, pear, and apricot trees good service, when infested by leaf-rolling caterpillars, besides other insect foes of which we take no note. He is also a very useful auxiliary to the farmer, as well as to the gardener, by destroying a multitude of small seeds, amongst which I may enumerate those of chickweed, groundsel, bulbous and hairy crowfoot. He is one of the most determined of all the plunderers of our turnip-seed; and I see that those who practice this branch of husbandry sustain considerable loss, notwithstanding that a watch is daily set.

When our grain crops ripen in August and September, the Chaffinches which haunted the recesses of woods and plantations flock to the borders, and unless the farmer is attentive to such matters, as from their small size they cannot be perceived at a distance, their depredations are often carried on with impunity. The trees around our dwellings are also the rendezvous of parties of plunderers, who sometimes join the Sparrows, but oftener keep together, and feed amongst the standing corn, at a greater distance from the hedge-row than the latter even venture. After the wheat is cut and placed in shocks, and whilst yet in a soft state, I have observed the Chaffinch deprive each grain of its outside coat previously to swallowing it. Although they always prefer feeding in the neighbourhood of trees or bushes, yet, as the season advances, they are compelled to haunt more exposed situations. Of the cereal grasses, wheat and oats are their favourites, barley—the only other species cultivated in these parts—being held in less esteem.”

There is something very cheerful in the common note of the Chaffinch, and, as harbinging the return of spring, it is always hailed with welcome by the observer of the sights and sounds of the country. It is heard so soon as the beginning of February, or even the end of January, ordinarily resembling the monosyllables 'twink, twink,' and afterwards 'tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet.'

This is the more usual number of repetitions, but the chirp is sometimes half as long again, and sometimes only half as long. An addition is made to it at its re-commencement for the season, somewhat resembling the syllables 'churr-ee.' Its song has but little variety, and is short, but mellow, and not altogether devoid of melody. At first it is only heard about the middle of the day, but as the season advances it is more prolonged, though never so late, as never is it either commenced so early, as that of many other birds. Discontinued during the busy part of the summer, it is resumed, though at first imperfectly, the end of July or beginning of August. The young males then essay the song their fathers have sung before them, but it requires some practice before they attain to their specific amount of excellence.

Two broods are hatched in the year. The first is usually abroad by the beginning or middle of May; the second by the end of July.

The nest of the Chaffinch is built on fruit or other trees in orchards and gardens, in the fields and hedges, and in the latter themselves also, occasionally, against a wall. The late Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, has recorded one which was placed in a whin bush; and another, which came under the observation of Mr. J. R. Garrett, which was built against the stem of a pine tree, and

rested on one of the branches, to which it was bound with a piece of fine whip-cord: this was taken once round the branch, and its ends were firmly interwoven in the materials of the nest. It is commonly placed from six to twelve feet from the ground—sometimes higher; it is rarely completed before the end of April. While it is being fabricated, the birds shew great disquietude at the approach of any one, by continued notes of alarm, and actions depictive of uneasiness. The nest of one pair has been known to have been built in a bean'rick. The male bird assists in the work of incubation. The hen bird, when sitting, is strongly tenacious of her place, and is not easily frightened from it; sometimes allowing herself to be captured sooner than forsake her charge; in one instance she has been found frozen to death at her post.

The nest is truly a beautiful piece of workmanship, compact and neat in the highest degree. It is usually so well adapted to the colour of the place where it is built, as to elude detection from any chance passer by—close scrutiny is required to discover it. It is therefore variously made, according to the nature of the elements of construction at hand. Some are built of grasses, stalks of plants, and small roots, compacted with the scales of bark and wool, and lined with hair, with perhaps a few feathers; the outside being entirely covered with tree moss and lichens, taken from the tree itself in which it is placed; the assimilation being thus rendered complete. Others are without any wool, its place being supplied by thistle-down and spider-cots. In fact the bird accommodates itself to circumstances, or rather circumstances to its requirements, using such materials as are at hand. The upper edge of the nest is generally very neatly woven with slender straws,

and the width of the open part is often not more than an inch and a half, but usually an inch and three quarters; the whole is firmly fixed between the branches to which some of its component parts are attached for the purpose.

In the neighbourhood of Belfast, where there are "branches" of the cotton manufacture, these birds use that material in the construction of their nests; and in answer to the objection that its conspicuous colour would betray the presence of the nest, and not accord with the theory that birds assimilate the outward appearance of their structures to surrounding objects, it was replied, says Mr. Thompson, that, on the contrary, the use of cotton in that locality might rather be considered as rendering the nest more difficult of detection, as the road-side hedges and neighbouring trees were always dotted with tufts of it.

A correspondent in the "Field Naturalist's Magazine" gives an account of a pair of Chaffinches which built in a shrub, so close to the window of his sitting-room, that he was enabled to be a close observer of their 'modus operandi,' and its results. The foundation of the nest was laid on the 12th. of April; the female alone worked at the structure, and after unwearied diligence, completed her task in three weeks. Think of this, bird-nesters, and leave the artist the product of her toil; take gently out, if you will, an egg or two for your collection, but leave her some to gladden her maternal heart! The first egg, he continues, was laid on the 2nd. of May; four others were subsequently added, and the whole five were hatched on the 15th. of that month. During the whole of the time of incubation, neither the curiosity of the observer, nor constant observation from the opened window disturbed the parent bird from her care, but she sat most patiently and courageously.

The male bird often visited his partner, but it was not discovered whether he ever brought her food. Bewick says that the male bird is sedulously attentive to the female during the time of incubation.

Archibald Hepburn, Esq., writes as follows in the "Zoologist," pages 572-3, dating from Whittingham, March 16th., 1844:—"About the end of April the first nest is built, and is usually composed of the following materials—moss, lichens, grass, and pieces of thread; and lined with feathers, wool, and hair; and out of these simple materials a most beautiful fabric is constructed. It is placed in a variety of trees and bushes—the hawthorn hedge is a great favourite; and two wall pear trees in our garden are almost annually tenanted. One of the oldest circumstances that I can recollect about birds is, that a pair of Chaffinches annually built their nest in an old pear tree till it was cut down about five years ago; and also that the nest was annually placed upon a branch overhanging a walk, so low that the whole was often struck by the heads of passengers.

When built in wall fruit trees, the following method is pursued:—A quantity of materials is deposited between the branch and the wall, the end of which is laid upon a branch, and this serves for a foundation. Sometimes it is placed amongst the spurs, and at other times it is simply shaded by a few leaves, and when finished, the lining only intervenes between the sitting bird and the wall: a few days are occupied in building the nest, then four or five eggs are deposited, one each day. The female, like most birds, sits eleven or twelve days, and in as many more the young are fledged. When engaged in constructing their nest, especially when it is in a wood, both birds, by their cries and gestures, seek



to entice an intruder from the neighbourhood, by flitting about his path, and after he has removed to a distance, they again return to the place. This same species of guile is practised by the male while his mate is sitting. The young follow their parents for some days, and are very garrulous for food. It is during the period when occupied in supplying the wants of his family, that the active habits of the bird are displayed to the greatest advantage, and all his bodily energies are called into play."

With reference to the structure of the nidification of our present subject, Mr. Hewitson well observes upon its extreme elegance and beauty. He says, "Few can have passed through life so unobservant as not to have seen, and in seeing to have admired the nest of the Chaffinch. No one whose heart is touched by the beauties of nature, can have examined this exquisite structure without uttering some exclamation of wonder and delight, and of comparing it, like the poet, with all that is most admirable in art and of man's invention.

Amongst the tiny architects of the feathered race, there are few that can compete with the Chaffinch. Its nest is not only perfect in its inward arrangements, but is tastefully ornamented on the outside as well, with materials such as nature can alone employ. In its outward decoration some individuals employ much more taste than others, but all seem to think it indispensable to deck the green walls of their dwellings with gems of white; and when, in the neighbourhood of a town, the beautiful white lichens which are used for that purpose are obscured and blackened by the smoke of our chimneys, they have recourse to something else."

He adds that a nest of the Chaffinch, which was built in an old willow tree, in a garden where no

white lichens could be found, was ornamented with fragments of white paper. "The Chaffinch builds its nest in many different situations, preferring old moss-grown apple or crab trees, and whitethorn bushes. There is, however, scarcely a low tree, upon the branches of which the nest may not be sometimes found, occasionally upon the flat bough of a spruce fir, in hollies, and often in hedges. I have found one on the top of a dead stake fence. The nest is composed chiefly of moss, so worked and matted together with wool that it is no easy matter to pull it into pieces as small as those of which it was first formed; inside of this is a very thick lining of dry grass, wool, feathers, thistle-down, and hair, in succession."

Mr. Knapp, the author of the "Journal of a Naturalist," says, "I have observed these birds, in very hot seasons, to wet their eggs, by discharging moisture from their bills upon them, or at least perform an operation that appeared to be so."

The old birds continue together throughout the summer, and as the broods become able to associate with their parents, they may be found in small parties, which again further unite together as winter advances.

The eggs are four or five in number, of a short oval form, and of a dull bluish green colour, clouded with dull red, often blended together into one tint. They are slightly streaked and somewhat spotted irregularly over their whole surface with dark dull well-defined red spots. Some have been found of a uniform dull blue, without any spots.

Male; length, about six inches, or from that to six and a half, or more; bill, clear bluish, tipped with black, with a tinge of purple red on the lower surface of the under mandible—the feathers over the base of the under

bill are black; the base becomes whitish after the autumnal moult; iris, hazel. Forehead, black, sides of the head dull pink, with a tinge of rufous; crown, neck on the sides, and nape, fine bluish lead-colour; chin, throat, and breast, on its upper part, dull pink, with a tinge of rufous; the latter on its lower part fades off into dull white, with a very faint tinge of reddish. Back, chesnut brown, the feathers become margined with yellowish grey in the winter, olive colour on the lower part.

The wings expand to the width of eleven inches and a half; greater wing coverts, black at the base, broadly tipped with yellowish white, forming a conspicuous bar; some of the lesser wing coverts are fine bluish lead-colour, others white, and others tipped with white, forming another conspicuous bar. The three first primaries are brownish black, edged with yellowish or buff white on the outer web; the remainder are white at the base, forming a distinct spot, with part of their inner webs white, and the inner half of the outer webs margined with pale yellow. The first quill feather is about an eighth of an inch shorter than the second, third, and fourth, which are nearly equal, and the longest in the wing, the third rather the longest of the three; the fifth is rather shorter than the first. Secondaries, as some of the primaries, namely, white at the base, with part of their inner webs white, and the inner half of the outer webs margined with pale yellow; tertiaries, the same, but more broadly margined with the pale yellow; larger and lesser under wing coverts, greyish white. The tail has the two middle feathers lead-colour, tinged with olive, blackish along the shafts, and the other next ones black, the outside one on each side being obliquely marked with white on the inner web, and the whole,

or part of the outer web is of that colour; the next feather also is tipped with a triangular-shaped patch of white on the inner web; the tail is very slightly forked; upper tail coverts, lead-colour, tinged with olive; under tail coverts, dull white, as the lower part of the breast. Legs, toes, and claws, dusky reddish or brown.

After the autumnal moult, the colours of the feathers are much obscured, losing their brightness, and the edges wear away, but by the beginning of April, or even so early as January, the black of the forehead becomes nearly pure, the greyish blue of the head nearly unmixed, and the breast brighter in tint.

Female; length, from about five inches and three-quarters to six inches, or six and a quarter; bill, brownish dull pale red colour; iris, as in the male. Head on the crown, greyish olive, paler on the central part; on the sides it is olive; chin, throat, and breast, brownish white, or dull fawn-colour, with a very faint tinge of red. Back, dull light greyish brown on the upper part, and on the lower part pale dull yellowish green. The wings, which extend to the width of ten inches, have the white bars and spots as in the male, but less conspicuous. The primaries and secondaries have yellow edges also as in the male, and the black is changed for deep brown; under tail coverts, nearly white.

The young male resembles the female until after the autumnal moult, when he begins gradually to assume his future distinctive colours; until then the tints are paler, and the green on the lower part of the back is wanting.

In some specimens of the Chaffinch the throat and breast are of a lighter or deeper red, the quill feathers of the wing more or less black, and the white bands

on the wings more or less tinged with yellow.

A curious variety of this species is recorded in the "Zoologist," page 1955, by J. H. Gurney and William Richard Fisher, Esqrs., as having been killed on the 30th. of August, in the year 1847. The following is their account and description of it:—The bird is a young male, the ground colour of its plumage is white, but pervaded throughout with a delicate canary yellow colour. This tint is strongest on the back, especially on the lower part, on the edges of the quill feathers of the wings and of the tail feathers. The eyes are of the natural colour. It was shot at Brooke, in the county of Norfolk, by H. K. Thompson, Esq. Mr. G. B. Clarke also records another in "The Naturalist," vol. i., page 142, which was nearly white, there being but a few coloured feathers in it. It was shot at Froxfield, near Woburn, Bedfordshire.

The late William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, gives an account of another, in his valuable "Natural History of Ireland," of which he says that it was of the full adult size of the Chaffinch in every measurement, and singularly and beautifully marked, the prevailing colour of its plumage being pure white, but the head tinted with yellow, and the centre of the back rich yellow, like that of the canary; the wing coverts and upper tail coverts being also delicately tinged with that colour. It had a few of the ordinary blackish grey and brown feathers of the Chaffinch, as follows:—one or two on the head, some on the back, and some, very few, on the wings and tail, but altogether inconspicuous. The primaries and the tail feathers, as well as their shafts, were pure white, and the whole plumage partook as much of, or more than, I should be inclined to say from his description, that of the Canary, as of that of the Chaf-

finch. He also relates that Mr. J. V. Stewart met with a white one; and, further, that in May, 1844, a pair were found, just after leaving the nest, in the garden of John Legge, Esq., of Glynn Park, near Carrickfergus, which were united together after the manner of the "Siamese Twins."

## MOUNTAIN FINCH.

BRAMBLING. BRAMBLE FINCH. LULEAN FINCH

<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> ,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Fringilla lulensis</i> ,	GMELIN.

*Fringilla*, also *Fringilla*—A Chaffinch. *Montifringilla*. Mons—  
A mountain. *Fringilla*—A Chaffinch, or bird of the Finch  
kind.

THIS handsome species is a native of some of the northern parts of the European continent, being to be met with in Norway, Sweden, Lapland, and Denmark; and on the other hand, even so far south as Italy, and doubtless occasionally in others of the neighbouring countries, “where the blue waters roll” of the tideless Mediterranean; from the “Pillars of Hercules,” to the “Holy Land” of Palestine, for it is stated to occur also in Asia, in Asia Minor, and even in Japan; the latter according to M. Temminck. In Thuringia vast flocks are said to assemble in the beech forests.

In this country it is found of course most numerous in the north, but also not very unfrequently even in the extreme south—in Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall. Edward Hearle Rodd, Esq., of Trebartha Hall, sent Mr. Yarrell word of a pair which were killed near the Land’s end, in the winter of the year 1836. Mr. George B. Clarke, of Woburn, Bedfordshire,



MOUNTAIN FINCH.





informs me that in some winters great numbers are seen in the Park of Woburn Abbey, the seat of His Grace the Duke of Bedford, which they frequent to feed on the beech-mast there. Two or three were seen near Pool Cottage, Dewchurch, Herefordshire, in 1845: immense flocks were met with near Farnham, Surrey, in the winter of 1842. In Sussex, A. E. Knox, Esq. says that they are plentiful during protracted snow and frost, and that some are captured every winter on the Downs in nets. In Gloucestershire a few have been met with near Cheltenham; and some in Warwickshire near Leamington. At Lilford, Northamptonshire, the Hon. Thomas Littleton Powys has once met with it, and the Rev. R. P. Alington saw several some years since, near Swinhope, Lincolnshire.

In Scotland, and also in various parts of Ireland, it is met with, and in some winters has been seen in very large flocks in different counties. The character of the season seems to be the cause that regulates its movements, at least in any numbers. In severe ones, very many have accordingly been discovered in places where few, if any, had ever been seen before. A day or two before the very great snow-storm that occurred in the beginning of January, 1827, one of these birds alighted on the "Chieftain," steam-packet, on the passage between Liverpool and Belfast.

In the Orkney Islands, the only instance of its being noted, appears to be one which occurred at Lopness, in Sanday, May 19th., 1839.

Its habitat is in the wild and mountainous districts, from whence its specific name, both scientific and vernacular.

The Mountain Finch is a migratory species, being with us a winter visitor only. The dates of its appear-

ance are irregular, varying probably according to the state of the weather in the countries from which they have migrated. Bewick mentions their having been seen on the hills in the county of Cumberland, so early as the middle of August; but it is at least possible that these might have been birds which had been bred in that county the same summer, for it would appear that some may do so, coupling the fact just stated with the circumstance mentioned in "Loudon's Magazine of Natural History," for the year 1835, that on the 6th. of May, in that year, one was shot in a fir plantation about four miles east of York. Meyer also records two or three instances in which he believed that he saw the species in summer. The usual time however of its arrival in Scotland is the end of the month of October, or beginning of November; the former being the date in the northern parts, the latter in the more southern. In mild winters few, if any, advance into England; while in severe weather they are driven forwards in great numbers. They depart again in March.

These birds go in flocks in winter, and Pennant mentions that he received eighteen from Kent, which had been all killed at one shot. Sometimes they are observed mixed with other species of graminivorous birds, and at other times they have been seen in large numbers by themselves. They are said to be good to eat, but to have a bitter taste. When alarmed, they betake themselves to trees, as do the other birds of the family to which they belong. They seem to be very easily reconciled to confinement, but the late William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, relates that a pair which were kept in a large cage in a greenhouse with some other birds, made such a noise throughout moonlight nights as to disturb the family, and consequently

they had to be removed to another place. Bewick says, quoting Buffon, that in France they appear sometimes in immense numbers, and that in one year they were so numerous that more than six hundred dozen were killed each night during the greater part of the winter. It is not said, however, whether this was in one locality, or the total produce of the whole country, which latter again it would be next to impossible even to arrive at a proximate guess at, as no previous preparation would have been made for taking a 'census' of these unexpected strangers. I should rather therefore imagine that they have to be set down as the results of the "long bow," rather than of the gun or the net.

Their flight is rapid and undulated. They roost in trees, seeming to give a preference to plantations of fir and larch.

The food of this species consists of grain, the seeds of the grasses and other plants, and beech-mast. It forages in the fields, in company with birds of other species, until driven by stress of weather and the absence of supply to the neighbourhood of the homestead, where it picks up anything it can meet with on the ground, but it does not seem to pilfer from the stacks.

Its note is ordinarily a single monotonous chirp, resembling the syllable 'tweet,' but in the spring of the year it has a pleasing warble—a succession of low notes, ended by a more hoarse and protracted one. Meyer likens it to the words 'chip-u-way.'

The nest is placed in lofty fir and other trees, is formed of moss, and lined with wool and feathers. R. Dashwood, Esq., of Beccles, Suffolk, had these birds lay, in two instances, in the year 1839; and in the latter the eggs were hatched. His aviary is a large one, enclosing a considerable space of ground, and is sur-

rounded with ivy, and planted inside with shrubs. If birds are to be kept in confinement at all, some such place is the only one in which they should be confined. The nest having been completed four days, the first egg was laid on the 16th. of June in the above-named year, and another was laid each day until the 21st., when they were removed. The nest was composed of moss, wool, and dry grass, and lined with hair; and these materials were selected from a variety which the birds had the option of making use of. The foundations, which were large, were worked in among the stalks of the ivy leaves.

"In the latter part of July, in the same year," says Mr. Dashwood, writing to Mr. Hewitson, "another pair of Bramblings built, placing their nest on the ground, close to a shrub or a tuft of grass. The outside of the nest was made of moss, and it was lined with hair. From this nest I removed four eggs on the 1st. of August. On the 17th. of June, 1840, they laid again, having built in the ivy. This nest I did not disturb, and although the eggs were hatched, they did not succeed in rearing the young ones."

In the "Account of the Birds found in Norfolk," presently to be again referred to regarding our present subject, the authors mention the following instance, or rather instances, of these birds nesting in confinement, communicated to them by a gentleman residing near Norwich. A pair of Bramblings built a nest in an aviary in the last week of the month of June, 1842, and two eggs were laid, both of which were removed, and found to be good. In June, 1843, the same birds again nested, and the female laid two eggs, and these having been removed, they formed a second nest in a different spot, in which four eggs were

deposited. The last nest, together with the eggs, was accidentally destroyed, and it was not ascertained whether the eggs laid during the year were good or not.

The eggs are four or five in number, white, spotted with yellowish brown.

Male; length, six inches and a quarter, to six and three-quarters; the upper bill is dusky, the point bluish black; the under bill, dusky yellowish white, with the point bluish black: in the spring and summer it is extremely dark lead-coloured. Iris, brown. Head on the crown and sides, neck on the back, and nape, in the winter, rich mottled grey and black, each feather being black at the base, and grey at the tip: in the spring these brown tips disappear, leaving the white of these parts of a fine velvet black, which the bird retains until the next autumnal moult. Chin, throat, and breast on its upper part, rich orange fawn-colour; the latter is white, or yellowish white on its lower part, and on the sides it is varied with blackish spots and light brown. Back on the upper part, as the head and nape, but the grey edges of the feathers exchanged for rust-colour; on the lower part white.

The wings extend to the width of about ten inches and a half; greater wing coverts, jet black, tipped with orange fawn-colour; lesser wing coverts, rich orange fawn-colour, the feathers tipped with white; primaries, black, some of them with narrow light-coloured outside edges, forming an oblique bar when the wing is closed, and with a white spot at the base; the first three wing feathers are nearly equal in length and the longest in the wing, the third being rather longer than the others, and the fourth feather is about an eighth shorter than the third; secondaries, edged with orange fawn-

colour or reddish orange; tertiaries, black, broadly edged with orange fawn-colour, or reddish orange. The larger under wing coverts have a small tuft of elongated feathers, and the lesser under wing coverts are bright yellow. Tail, black, the feathers edged with buff white, the outer feather on each side with a patch of dull white on the inner web; the middle pair of feathers are shorter by about, but not quite, half-an-inch than the rest, making the tail forked; upper tail coverts black, the feathers having grey borders; under tail coverts, white, or yellowish white; legs, toes, and claws, rather light brown.

The female is said by some to be considerably, and by others only slightly, less in size than the male. Length, about six inches; in the winter plumage there is over the eye a streak of brownish black; it has less of the black colour on the crown of the head, which is therefore more brown coloured, the centres of the feathers being brownish black; and on the sides it is dull brownish grey, with two dark lines dividing the sides of the neck from the nape. Neck on the back and sides, and nape, dull brownish grey, with two longitudinal black bands behind; throat and breast dull reddish buff orange, the sides paler and unspotted; back, on the upper part, blackish brown, and on the lower part patched with greyish white, the feathers margined with yellowish brown or grey, giving it an elegant mottled appearance.

The wings extend to the width of about ten inches; their feathers are marked as in the male, but the dark parts are blackish brown. The tail has the two middle feathers grey. All the colours in the female are less pure than in the male, and clouded with dull brown.

The young are described as resembling the adult

female; the black of the head, back, and wings being tinged with brown. Individuals have been met with either wholly white, or with patches of that colour.

In the carefully compiled and valuable "Account of the Birds found in Norfolk," by John Henry Gurney, Esq., and William Richard Fisher, Esq., there is an account and figure of a very beautiful variety of the Mountain Finch, described as follows:—With the exception of a brown patch on one or two feathers of one side of the tail, this specimen was entirely white; the greater part of its plumage being also pervaded with an elegant tint of yellow, which particularly spread itself on the sides of the head, and on the edges of the quill feathers of the wings and tail, as well as on the feathers under the wing. The colour of these latter, which is usually yellow, was remarkably bright in this specimen, and extended over a greater space than usual.



## TREE SPARROW.

## MOUNTAIN SPARROW.

<i>Passer montanus,</i>	RAY.
<i>Pyrgila montana,</i>	FLEMING.
<i>Fringilla montana</i>	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Loxia Hamburgia,</i>	GMELIN.

*Passer*—A Sparrow.    *Montana*—Appertaining to mountains.  
*Mons*—A mountain.

THIS is an interesting bird, of just sufficient rarity to make its acquisition generally acceptable; while not so uncommon as to fall to the lot of but few to obtain, or to run the risk of extermination itself, so far as our country at least is concerned. It is also one of peculiarly neat appearance, though altogether destitute of any pretensions to outside shew—‘simplex munditijs’—elegantly neat. There are who might borrow a lesson even from the Tree Sparrow, and it is, if they would learn it—that they are “when unadorned, adorned the most.”

It is indigenous in most countries of Europe, from the Mediterranean, through Spain, Italy, France, and Holland, to Norway and Sweden, and extends also over a considerable portion of Asia, being common, it is said, in Siberia and Lapland, as also in Japan and China, and in some of the mountainous parts of India.



TREE SPARROW.



In Yorkshire, and no doubt in other northern counties, it breeds. It is not unfrequent near York, and also in several parts of the West Riding—near Doncaster, Barnsley, Wakefield, and Leeds. In Worcestershire, I have known this species not very unfrequent in the neighbourhood of Broomsgrove; one I remember to have been shot near Charford brook, and others, 'si rite recordor,' were taken on the winter nights in the stacks in which they roosted with various other birds: one appears to have been obtained, and only one, in the county of Cornwall. In Lancashire it has been observed about Chat Moss, and is not uncommon in Shropshire; in Northamptonshire, it has been seen near Aldwinkle, by Mr. Doubleday; in Surrey, by Mr. Meyer; and in Sussex, by A. E. Knox, Esq., who says that it is a scarce bird there, though possibly more frequently overlooked than observed, and that it probably breeds there in some instances, as he has obtained specimens in May and June. It is frequently taken by the bird-catchers on the Downs near Brighton, when in company with other birds.

It is likewise met with in the county of Essex, near Southchurch; in Lincolnshire, near Wainfleet, and no doubt in other localities; as also in Suffolk, Norfolk, Staffordshire, Rutlandshire, Cambridgeshire, Durham, and Northumberland, as far north as Newcastle. In the neighbourhood of Yarmouth, it is stated by the Messrs. C. J. and James Paget, in their *Natural History of that place*, to be not uncommon in lanes, and also near the town. John Henry Gurney, and William Richard Fisher, Esqrs., in their "*Account of the Birds found in Norfolk*," say of them that a few are found in that county, and breed there, remaining throughout the year, and that they are very local in

their habits, except in winter, when they sometimes disperse in search of food.

In Ireland it appears to be unknown, and the same remark applies to the Orkneys. In Scotland it has occurred on Main Wood, near Elgin, but I am not aware of any other record of its having been met with in that part of the kingdom.

It is locally migratory, arriving in Sussex in the month of October, and usually departing again in April.

The Tree Sparrow and the House Sparrow are as different in their habits as Horace's country-bred and town-bred mice. The former shuns the habitations of man, which the latter makes his own, and only approaches even a village, when the severity of the weather renders such an approach necessary through lack of food elsewhere. The hilly and more mountainous districts are the more sought in preference by them, as imported by their specific Latin name, while the others abound in the most level districts. They are sprightly and active birds.

Both old and young birds of this species collect together in flocks with other birds during the winter half of the year, when they frequent, together with them, the usual places of resort for the procuring of food, namely farm-yards, and other situations where it is to be obtained.

Their flight is rather heavy, slow, and strained, as if the wings were not sufficiently equal to the carriage of the body through the air. They often progress along the ground in the same sort of sidelong manner that the Common Sparrow does; and they have also a habit of flirting the tail slightly about, especially when they first alight.

The food of this species consists of insects and the

tender parts of vegetables; these in the spring and summer, their "second course" being grain and seeds: with the former the young are fed.

The common note of the Tree Sparrow is a monotonous chirp, not unlike that, so well known, of the House Sparrow, but more shrill; and of its higher vocal powers, Mr. Edward Blyth says that it consists of a number of these chirps, intermixed with some pleasing notes, delivered in a continuous strain, sometimes for many minutes together, very loudly, but having a characteristic Sparrow-like tone throughout.

James Dalton, Esq., of Worcester College, Oxford, informs me that he has taken the nest of this bird from a Sand Martin's hole, near Buckingham. They build in many various situations, most frequently in a hole of a tree, whence their English name, either that formed naturally by decay, or that in which some other bird, such as the Woodpecker, or one of the species has previously domiciled; sometimes also, in old nests that had been inhabited by Magpies and Crows; and in these cases, the nest, that is that of the Tree Sparrow, is domed over, as is done also by the House Sparrow, when it locates its habitation in similar situations. Not unfrequently they build in the thatch of barns and out-houses, but only in thoroughly country places, the entrance being from the outside; also in the tiling of houses, and in stacks and wood faggots; likewise in old walls, not many feet above the ground. Arthur Strickland, Esq., of Bridlington Quay, has recorded that a pair built their nest, a domed one, in a hedge in the grounds of Walton Hall.

Nidification, it would appear, commences in February, and incubation in March, two or three broods being reared in the year.

The nest is formed of hay, and is lined with wool, down, and feathers. It is loosely put together, and the consequence of this untidiness, the larger straws being left hanging carelessly outside, is, that the situation of the nest is betrayed to the prowling bird-nester. The same situation is often again occupied from year to year.

The eggs, from four to six in number, are of a dull white, speckled all over with light greyish brown of different shades.

This bird does not vary much in plumage at different seasons of the year, an additional brilliancy in spring being the main feature. Male; weight, about six drachms; length, about five inches and a half, or from that to three quarters; bill, bluish black and polished in the spring and summer; in the winter black at the tip only, and yellowish towards the base. Iris, dark brown; in front of the eye, between it and the bill, and running through it is a black mark, and underneath a narrow black streak; there is also a large black patch on the side of the head. Head on the crown, chesnut of an opaque shade. Neck on the sides, white, with a triangular-shaped spot of pure black, on the back it is chesnut, spotted with black on its lower part, the inner webs of the feathers being of that colour; nape, chesnut, interrupted by an incomplete band of white; chin and throat, black. Breast, greyish white, tinged on the sides with yellowish brown. Back on the upper part, chesnut with black spots or streaks, the inner webs of the feathers being of that latter colour, and the outer of the former in nearly equal proportion; on the lower part it is yellowish brown.

The wings extend to within an inch and a half of the end of the tail; greater wing coverts, deep blackish

brown, edged with chesnut, white at the end; lesser wing coverts, deep blackish brown edged with chesnut, and some of them white at the end, so that there are thus made two bands of white across the wing; primaries, brownish black, edged on the outside webs with pale yellowish brown, broadening where the web widens, and extending to the shaft at the base, and on the inner ones more broadly with chesnut brown. The first quill feather is the same length as the fifth, the second, third, and fourth nearly equal in length, and the longest in the wing, but the second rather the longest of the three; the secondaries also brownish black, margined in the same way but more widely; tertiaries, brownish black, still more widely edged with chesnut brown. Greater and lesser under wing coverts, pale fawn-colour. The tail is very little forked, the feathers being of nearly equal length; they are greyish brown, edged with yellowish grey; upper tail coverts also brown. Legs, toes, and claws, pale greyish yellow brown.

The female resembles the male, but is rather less in size, her length being not quite five inches and a half, and her tints are paler; the head is yellowish brown on the crown, and the chesnut parts are changed to the former colour.

In the young the head on the crown is paler than in the adult, and the white on the neck is not so pure. The throat does not assume at first the black of the mature bird.



## SPARROW.

HOUSE SPARROW. COMMON SPARROW.

*Passer domesticus*,  
*Fringilla domestica*,  
*Pyrgita domestica*,

SELBY.  
 PENNANT. MONTAGU.  
 FLEMING.

*Passer*—A Sparrow. *Domesticus*—Domestic--of, or pertaining  
 to houses.

THE geographical range of this well-known bird is very extensive. It is common throughout Europe, from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Dalmatia, to Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Levant, Liguria, and all the islands of the Mediterranean; in the north of Africa and the range of the Nubian mountains; in Asia also, in the Himalayan district, and in various other parts.

Everywhere he is the same, at least under the same circumstances, except indeed in appearance; for, "unlike, O how unlike," is the smoke-begrimed Sparrow of the town, to the handsomely-plumaged bird of the country! Everywhere he makes himself at home, and 'æquo pulsat pede pauperumque tabernas, regumque turres.' The "cloud-capt towers" and the "Poor Law Union," the "lowly thatched cottage," and the splendid Gothic mansion, nay, the very palace of the Queen of England herself, one and all bear testimony to the universality of the dispersion of the Sparrow, and the self-accommodating nature of his domiciliary visitations.



SPARROW.

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In this country it is everywhere, or nearly everywhere to be seen in greater or less abundance. In the neighbourhood of Doncaster, it comes under the latter category, for some years ago I recorded in the "Naturalist," old series, vol. ii., page 166, my observation, corroborated on his noticing it by the editor, that there they are, I mean, that they were at that time, far from common birds.

Throughout Ireland, Scotland, and the Orkney and Shetland Islands it is to be found as in England. In the outer Hebrides it is said to have been known only at Kilbar, in the island of Barra, where it had made its abode in a ruined church, thus fulfilling literally the words of the Psalmist, "Yea, the Sparrow hath found her a house, and the Swallow a nest where she may lay her young; even Thy altars O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God." It now appears to be multiplying in that district.

Following the methodical arrangement prescribed to myself in the introduction to the present "History of British Birds," at this stage of the narrative of the Sparrow, I have arrived at that portion of my, alas! too brief, allotted space, which is assigned to the subject of migration. But on this head, little could be said: where is the Sparrow to migrate to or from, for where is he not to be found?

Wherever this bird is met with, his character is as I have said, much the same—bold, pert, and familiar; "instead of the gentle and pleasing confidence displayed towards the human race by the Redbreast, the Nightingale, the Redstart, and some other small birds, the Sparrow shews a bold disregard that is far from engaging affection; as if our kindness and our enmity were alike despised. Instances are not wanting, however,

of great attachment on the part of caged Sparrows, for persons by whom they have been reared."

In London, where, as in most large towns, they abound, one has been known to perch on and under the moveable 'café' of one of those examples of "London labour and the London poor," who deserve far more commiseration than I fear even Mr. Mayhew's very able work will earn for them—from some at least—and there pick up its crumbs; nay, not only was it wont thus daily and hourly to do, but it was even accustomed to go the length of a whole street to meet him and it on the way from his home—from his nightly home to his daily one—whenever and as often as he was detained, perhaps by the severity of a winter's morning. It would then ride back in the 'café,' wheeled along by him, to receive the reliques of the early meal which some industrious man would snatch on his way to his work—to "gather up the crumbs," though not from a "rich man's table." This Sparrow used to feed out of the hand of the said honest Patrick Corbett, to sit on his knec, and drink out of his cup; "she was unto him as a daughter." I say she, for it was a hen bird; and for four successive years, with a brief interval, all her progeny, which must at the expiration of that period, have amounted, at the rate of two or three broods a year, and five or six young to a brood, to some fifty or sixty at least, were "brought out" under the matronage of their mother, to the morning and evening entertainments which Patrick Corbett gave. Doubtless they returned the compliment in the way of "concerts of ancient music," for even the chirp of a Sparrow must be music to the dweller in a London street.

The interval above alluded to was a space of some two or three months, during which time our female

friend shunned the society of the keeper of the itinerant coffee-shop, who had, most unintentionally, wounded her maternal feelings. An individual Sparrow of one of her broods finding it at its first essay in the air, not so easy a thing to fly up as to fly down, was removed by Patrick, out of pure kindness, to his own house for the day, where it was treated with the greatest care and affection. Nevertheless it died, and the mother shewed her sense of the wrong of the supposed child-stealing, by abstaining for the period mentioned from the society of her patron and friend; but in process of time, a new family arrived, and for their sakes she overgot the injury, made up the quarrel, which, as it takes two parties to make, and in this case there was only one, it was no difficult matter to do, and all went on, and for ought I know, may still go on, at the corner of Tavistock Square, as harmoniously and pleasantly as before: 'adsit omen.'

The following pleasing instance of both instinct and affection on behalf of another individual of our present species is from the pen of Mr. William H. Cordeaux, in the "Zoologist," page 2798:—"Living in the city portion of the great metropolis of London, I observed, one afternoon, in the aperture generally left for the cellar, or kitchen window, when underground, an unfledged House Sparrow, incapacitated from flying to any distance, which had been inadvertently precipitated down this same dungeon, across which, in an oblique direction, was laid an iron bar, extending within a foot of the surface; the mother was at the top, looking down with pity and alarm at the awkward position of this, perhaps, her only child; many and ingenious were the attempts on the part both of parent and offspring for the regaining of the latter's lost position; each and all

proved futile and unavailing. I looked on with a degree of pleasurable excitement, mixed with fear and anxiety, lest the drama should be incomplete, by the flying away of the mother, and the desertion of the child; but no, Nature's inculcated ways on these points are perfect and all-sufficient, as most beautifully this case proves, for although each new proposal seemed to be blasted in the carrying out, at length the intelligent creature, after considering for a moment, flies away, returns with a stout straw in its beak, and rests for a few seconds on the edge; then conceive my delight, when the little nestling, after a chirp or two from its mother, learning no doubt the particulars of the project, climbs to the farthest end of the bar, next the ground, receives the proffered straw in its beak, and is raised, to my breathless and unspeakable astonishment, to the earth, on which its now delighted mother stands."

In the "Yorkshire Gazette," of August the 16th., 1851, there is the following account of a Sparrow which had been taken young and kept alive at a house at Ripon:—"It grew exceedingly familiar, following Mrs. Jones or her daughter about the house, perching on their shoulders, and at night taking its rest either on the top of the Canary-bird's cage, or the old clock. Since the present warm weather set in, it has generally taken flight, and remained out all night, but early in the morning it is to be seen ready to enter the house. Should the front door not be open, it flies round to the back one, and if there disappointed, flutters and taps its neb against the window. We are informed that when the doors are open this little bird will visit the house about six times a day for food."

Again, in the "Zoologist," pages 1298-1299, occurs the following, communicated by Mr. George Lawson,

of Hawkhill, near Dundee:—"One evening, about eight o'clock, I forget at what season of the year, but it was quite dark, a loud tapping was heard upon the panes of one of the windows of a room in which there was no light. The room was on the first floor of the building. There were but two persons, and both of these ladies, in the house at the time, and they were afraid to enter the room to trace the cause of the annoyance. The window looked into the garden, which lay on the south side of the house; and serious apprehensions of a robbery being entertained, one of the ladies, after locking the door of the room, ventured to enter the garden from the ground floor; but on looking to the window nothing could be discovered; the tapping noise however continued. The gentleman himself having returned home about nine o'clock, he procured a ladder, wherewith he ascended to the window, in order to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, when he found it to be a Common House Sparrow, busily tapping with its beak at one of the low panes. He took the little bird in his hand—it offered no resistance—brought it down with him, and put it in a cage, where it remained all night. On the following morning he took out the bird for the purpose of bringing it to me; but supposing it unable to fly, from the circumstance of its having allowed itself to be taken, he permitted it to leap out of his hand; which accomplished, it flew away, and has never since repeated its visit."

In the same magazine, pages 2351-2, Mr. William H. Tugwell appropriately gives the following remarkable instance of sagacity in the Common House Sparrow:—"This morning," November 24th., 1848, "it happened that a Sparrow had got his head fixed between two tiles, which were placed perpendicularly against a wall



in our garden, so as to completely prevent its extricating itself, when, on being discovered by its companions, several of them, by their united efforts, endeavoured to extricate him by laying hold of his head with their beaks and flying backwards, but without affecting their purpose. Their earnest solicitude for their brother in affliction, coupled with the awkwardness of the position, soon caused the death of the unfortunate bird. After extricating him by means of a pole, I found the head quite bared of the feathers, so earnest were his mates in their attempts to release him."

So again, "An unfortunate Sparrow," says Bishop Stanley, "who had also been made prisoner in his own nest, met with a very different fate, being actually killed, instead of preserved, by the over-zealous kind attentions of his mate. The case occurred in the spring of 1818, in Surrey. The pair were in search of a place for building their nest; and the male bird finding a tempting hole among the tiles of the roof, got into it; unfortunately he became entangled in the broken mortar, and could not force his way back. The female saw his situation, and after flying backwards several times, twittering, and apparently in great distress, attempted to pull him out. Several birds were attracted by the accident, and came fluttering round, but were beaten off by the hen Sparrow. She then redoubled her own efforts to get him out, and seizing his beak above the nostrils, with her own beak, pulled it so hard that she killed him. She did not appear, however, aware of the mischief she had done, but continued pulling at the dead body of the unfortunate bird, with as much perseverance as if it had been alive. She was, at length, driven away by a person who saw the whole transaction, and with some difficulty extricated the dead bird. Its

head was dreadfully mangled, and the beak of the hen had evidently penetrated the brain. About an hour afterwards, a Sparrow, supposed to be this hen, was observed sitting on the very spot where the accident had happened, crouched together, with her feathers all standing up, so as to give her the appearance of a ball, conveying a perfect idea of disconsolate suffering."

"A few years ago," says Mr. James Bladon, of Pontypool, in the "Zoologist," pages 16-17, "I was sitting in a cottage, when my attention was attracted to an unusual screaming of a small bird. I immediately went to the back door, and saw that it proceeded from a House Sparrow that was fluttering about on the wall, at the base of which was a duck with something in its bill, which it was endeavouring to swallow. Upon attentively observing it, I found this to be a callow nestling, and from the agonies of the poor Sparrow, there was no mistaking the parent; the feathers of the latter were all erect, and it continued hopping and fluttering about, and uttering the most distressing cries for the loss of one of its young, which I suppose had fallen out of the nest."

For a considerable portion of the year, Sparrows are occupied in pairs in the bringing out their several broods of young, and when the last of these is able to fly, the old and young ones together repair to the fields, where, during the time that the corn is ripe, they are to be seen in large flocks, gathering in their own harvest; but when the crops are carried, and the gleanings are over, they soon repair to their former quarters, and renew their familiarity with the habitations of men. They may indeed at all times be considered as gregarious birds in some degree; at all events they are generally brought together in greater or less numbers, so that the

"Sparrow that sitteth alone upon the house-top" has been well selected by the Psalmist as an emblem of forlorn melancholy. They shew considerable affection to each other, and anxiety for their young, and are spirited, courageous, energetic, cautious, cunning, and voracious birds. They are said to be trained in Persia to hunt butterflies, such being one of the royal sports there. In the spring of the year contests among themselves are frequently to be witnessed. Two at first begin; a third comes up and joins in the fray, when he is presently attacked by a fourth. Others stand still and look on, and behold the war.

*'Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis;'*

the din and clamour increases until some think it time to retreat, and this probably has the effect of breaking up the party, and so the 'emeute' is quieted. As in case of the modern 'duello,' no danger is done to either life or limb—the 'honour' of the parties is easily satisfied without; a hostile 'meeting' and a 'sham fight' are quite sufficient, without ulterior result.

Sparrows are very fond of bathing, and also of dusting themselves in the roads, at all seasons of the year, as well as of sunning themselves, lying on one side in some warm and sheltered place, such as a gravel walk, the roof of a house, or even against the wall of one. When not engaged in feeding, they perch on trees, bushes, and hedges, the tops of stacks and houses, walls and wood. At night they repose under the eaves of houses, about chimneys, in holes and crevices of buildings, in bushes, the sides of straw stacks, and among ivy, or other evergreen plants with which walls are covered. They often live in their nests in the cold weather, repairing them with straw and feathers, either for their own

warmth, or providing thus early for their future family.

"It is often remarked," says Dr. Stanley, "what impudent birds are London Sparrows! and not without reason. Born and bred in the bustle of the town, they must either live and jostle with the crowd, or look down from the house-tops and die of hunger. Naturally enough, they prefer the former; and all our London readers will, we are sure, testify to the cool intrepidity with which this familiar bird will pounce upon a bit of bread, or some other tempting morsel which happens to catch its eye upon the pavement, and with what triumph and exultation it bears it off to its mate, seated on some window-sill or coping-stone above, or followed, perhaps, by three or four disappointed companions, who were a moment too late in seizing the spoil."

"A Sparrow is not only bold with regard to men, but still more so on particular occasions towards other birds. On the edge of a certain lawn grew a close thick bush. On this lawn, amongst others, the Blackbirds used to come and forage for worms. One day a person happened to be looking at a Blackbird in the act of making off with a prize, when a Sparrow, darting from the thick bush, instantly assailed the Blackbird, and compelled him to drop the worm, of which he took immediate possession. So singular a circumstance induced the observer to look out now and then, when Blackbirds came, and he frequently saw the same piratical practice adopted by the Sparrow, who thus, by keeping watch in his bush, was enabled to enrich himself on the labours of the larger bird." I have lately observed one Sparrow chasing another in precisely a similar way, under similar circumstances. The Bishop continues, "But notwithstanding this unfavourable feature in his character, he has been known to act with great con -

sideration and kindness to birds requiring his good offices.

In the "Naturalist's Magazine," we find the following story in point:—"A lady, living in Chelsea, was extremely fond of birds, of which she kept a considerable number in cages. Amongst others she had a Canary, which was a particular favourite, but the loudness of his note often obliged her to put him outside of her window, in some trees which were trained up in front of her house. One morning, during breakfast, when the cage was there placed, a Sparrow was observed to fly round about it, then perch upon the top, and twitter to the bird within, between whom and itself a sort of conversation seemed to ensue. After a few moments he flew away, but returned in a short time, bearing a worm or small grub in his bill, which he dropped into the cage, and immediately flew away. Similar presents were received day after day, at the same time, by the Canary, from his friend the Sparrow, with whom, at length, he became so intimate, that he very often received the food thus brought into his own bill, from that of the Sparrow. The circumstance attracted the notice of the lady's neighbours, who often watched these daily visits; and some of them, to try the extent of the Sparrow's kindness, also hung their birds out at the window, when they found them also fed; but the first and longest visit was always paid by the Sparrow to his original friend, the Canary.

Though thus intimate and social with his own kind, it was observed that this Sparrow was exceedingly shy and timid with respect to human beings; for, though many were witnesses to the above, they were obliged to keep at a distance, and use great caution, otherwise he immediately flew away. This attention was carried on throughout the summer, and extended to the begin-

ning of autumn, when the visits entirely ceased, whether intentionally on the part of the Sparrow, or that he met with some accident, could not be ascertained."

"That they will attend to their young, far beyond the usual period, in case of necessity, the following anecdotes will prove, though we believe many, if not most birds, will do the same under similar circumstances; the experiment may be easily tried, by slightly tying the wings of young birds, when nearly fledged, or confining them by a thread to the bottom of the nest, taking care not to injure them." Even, however, with any amount of care, I would not wish to see this done, even though but for a short time, as needless anxiety at all events would be caused both to the old and the young bird.

"A pair of Sparrows," says Mr. Graves, "had built their nest in a wall close to my house. I noticed that the old birds continued to bring food to the nest some time after the brood had left it. I had the curiosity to place a ladder against the wall, and looked into the nest, when, to my surprise, I found a full-grown bird which had got its leg entangled in some thread, which formed part of the nest, in such a manner as to prevent its leaving it with the rest. Wishing to see how much longer the old birds would feed their imprisoned offspring, I left the young one as I found it, and observed that the parents supplied it, during the whole of the autumn and part of the winter months; but the weather setting in cold very soon after Christmas, I was afraid it would kill the young Sparrow, and therefore disengaged its leg. In a day or two it went with the old ones in search of food; but they continued to feed it till March, and during the whole time they all nestled in the same spot."

In the first volume of the "Zoological Journal," in a note to the fourteenth page, it is stated that a pair of Sparrows, which had built in the thatched roof of a house, were observed to continue their regular visits to the nest long after the time when the young birds ought naturally to have taken flight. This unusual circumstance continued throughout the year; and in the winter, a gentleman who all along observed them, determined on finding out the cause. He therefore placed a ladder, and, on mounting, found one of the young ones detained a prisoner by means of a string or scrap of worsted, which formed part of the nest, having become accidentally twisted round its leg. Being thus disabled from procuring its own living, it had been fed by the continued exertions of the parents.

The flight of the Sparrow is undulated and rather rapid, but if only made for a short distance, nearly direct with a continued fluttering motion. On the ground it advances by hops and leaps, both long and short.

The food of the well-known bird before us consists of insects, grain, and seeds, as also indeed of almost anything eatable that comes in its way; sometimes it pursues a butterfly or other insect on the wing, but it is not very expert as a fly-catcher. It may be seen in menageries fearlessly feeding among birds and beasts of all possible descriptions. It feeds its young for a time with soft fruits, young vegetables, and insects, particularly caterpillars. It is itself good eating.

Much has been written on the question of the comparative usefulness, or the contrary, of the Sparrow, as a devourer of the former-named food on the one hand, or of the latter on the other; and much I suppose one may allow is to be said on each side of the question, as so much has been said; but there can I think

be no doubt but that the harm they may do, even granting it to be considerable, is compensated, and more than compensated, by that which they prevent. Mr. John Hawley, of Doncaster, has sensibly argued the question in the "Zoologist," and thus states the case at page 2349:—"I have watched pairs of Sparrows repeatedly feeding their young, and have found that they bring food to the nest once in ten minutes, during at least six hours of the twenty-four, and that each time from two to six caterpillars are brought—every naturalist will know this to be under the mark. Now, suppose the "three thousand five hundred Sparrows" destroyed by the "Association for killing Sparrows," were to have been alive the next spring, each pair to have built a nest, and reared successive broods of young, during three months, we have, at the rate of two hundred and fifty-two thousand per day, the enormous multitude of twenty-one millions, one hundred and sixty-eight thousand larvæ prevented from destroying the products of the land, and from increasing their numbers from fifty to five hundred fold!"

Thus again, in the next article in the same magazine, Mr. Joseph Duff, of Bishop Auckland, writing from that place, November 15th., 1848, gives a calculation made by himself some years previously, as follows, he says, "Under the eaves were two Sparrows' nests, and, not having any other part of animated nature in view, I set myself the task of counting how often the Sparrows visited their nests with food during half-an-hour. One male bird, which was darker than the other, thus enabling me to distinguish him, captured fourteen flies on the wing, and the four birds went from their nests to a water-spout and back one hundred and four times." He then goes on to calculate that if the common large



flies, of which he ascertained that these were the larvæ, "are as prolific as the common house fly, which is computed to produce in one season no less than twenty millions nine hundred thousand—but say in round numbers twenty millions—thus were prevented, by the capture of fourteen flies, the amazing number of two hundred and eighty millions"

But even two Counsel will not suffice our Sparrow—his cause is a good one, but he has many and powerful enemies to plead against. Further, then, Mr. Edward Peacock, Jun., of Messingham, Kirton-in-Lindsay, Lincolnshire, February, 1849:—"I had not waited long before one came, darted under a tile, and in a few seconds flew away again. 'Well,' thought I, 'now is my time to catch the young rascals;' so up I climbed to the roof of the building, and drew out the nest, which contained four newly-hatched Sparrows. I took the young ones in my hands, when, lo! a green caterpillar crept from the mouth of one. I killed the four young birds, and each had caterpillars in it: this caused me to relent a little; but what struck me much more forcibly was, finding several wire-worms loose in the nest, which had obviously escaped from the young ones." And yet again, the same Mr. Duff, of Bishop Auckland, at pages 2415-16, "About a quarter of a mile east of this place is a round tower, standing on the Bishop of Durham's Domain, and near the park wall: it had been in a dilapidated state for many years, and in the crevices were many both Starling and Sparrow nests—of the latter some scores. It was an object of interest to his present Lordship; and about five or six years ago, to prevent its falling down, he had it repaired—every chink well pointed; and of course the colony was broken up, and the members dispersed: the next year but one,

the field in which it stands was sown with turnips, and when the plants came up, and escaped the ravages of the fly, they looked well, and grew as well as perhaps any other turnips for five or six weeks, when, to the astonishment of Mr. Dawson, the bailiff, every plant was entirely covered with grub: whether the caterpillars belonged only to one species or not I do not know, for at that time I did not go to see; but nine women were to be seen daily for some time, gathering them off the plants and destroying them. Before the following spring, several places in the building were re-opened, and the Sparrows soon took possession of their old domiciles; and since that time there has been no more trouble or loss with caterpillars. I leave the fact to speak for itself." There are many other similar accounts. Mr. Jesse, too, states in his "Gleanings in Natural History," that it has been calculated that a single pair of Sparrows during the time they have their young to feed, destroy above three thousand three hundred caterpillars in a week, besides other insects; countless thousands are thus prevented from multiplying.

The same Mr. Briggs, of Melbourne, whose arguments these gentlemen had been confuting, mentions afterwards incidentally, at page 2490, that from January to September, 1848, four thousand five hundred and seventy-nine Sparrows were sent to the "Melbourne Sparrow Club." I may here suggest that many of these supposed Sparrows may not actually have been such, for a similar institution existed until the present year in my own parish, and any small bird being conveniently called a Sparrow, and paid for accordingly by the authorities for the time being, at the rate of a half-penny each, the necessary funds amounted annually on the average to about five pounds. Many and many

an innocent victim has been sacrificed for this blood-stained "Head money," a stigma on the annals of our village jurisprudence. The farmers are the parties supposed to be benefitted, though how erroneous the supposition is, I think I have sufficiently shewn. If not a case of 'Felo de se,' it is one unquestionably of pecuniary suicide. "Temporary insanity" is the sole verdict that I, 'ex cathedrâ,' can pronounce against them, coupled with the wish that the repeal of the corn laws may make them more awake to their own real interests, and that their "Insanity" may only be "Temporary." In flower gardens Sparrows do some little mischief, especially among the gay blossoms of early spring, whether in search of insects or for mere amusement, it is hard to say. Crocuses and other bright-coloured flowers they seem to prefer, picking off the yellow ones, and leaving the purple and the white blossoms.

The note of this bird is a monotonous chirp, known to every one, and in addition to it a curious buzzing noise has been observed by one or two persons to have been uttered by this bird, but whether produced by the motion of the tail, which was kept fluttering all the time, or whether it proceeded from the throat, they seem to have been unable correctly to ascertain. The Rev. J. Pemberton Bartlett, at Kingston, and the Rev. Arthur Hussey, at Rottingdean, Sussex, both noticed it, and have recorded their observations thereon in the "Zoologist," at pages 353 and 452-3. These birds may often be seen and heard holding assemblies together, with a great deal of noise and clamour; and, as in "another place," there is a good deal that is unintelligible, and a large amount of repetition in what they say. The late William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, says that he has heard them begin their chattering in

the ivy that surrounded a town house at ten minutes past three in the morning, in the month of June, half-an-hour before they stirred out.

Mr. W. Kidd asserts in "The Naturalist," vol. i., page 150, that if a young Sparrow be taken from the nest when not more than four days old, before, that is to say, it has had time to learn its vernacular language, and be kept within hearing of a Canary, for instance, and of a Canary only, in full song, it will, in less than three weeks, begin to utter the notes of the Canary, and that in a short time the pupil will rival the master in song. I wish for the sake of many a young learner of a different species, that the science of music could be always as easily acquired.

The nest, which is large in size, and very loosely compacted, is usually placed under the eaves of the tiles of houses or other buildings, or in any hole or cavity that will supply it with a convenient receptacle for its brood. It is compiled of hay, straw, wool, moss, or twigs, and a profusion of feathers, which they are sometimes seen conveying to their holes even in winter. It often measures as much as six inches in diameter, and sometimes even much more, if the situation requires it. The materials just mentioned, as also any others that may meet the requirements of the bird, are variously disposed and arranged together, according to circumstances. Dove-cotes and pigeon-houses are frequently built in, and the same situation is continued to be resorted to, and this even when the young have been exposed to misfortune from rain. It would appear that trees are built in more from necessity than choice, namely by yearling birds which commence nidification late, by which time convenient places in walls have been preoccupied; or by individuals which

from some cause or other, had been obliged to give up the latter localities. Fewer broods in the year are produced therefore in the case of nests in trees, both from their being commenced later in the season, and from their requiring naturally more time in the construction: they are accordingly better made. Mr. Meyer describes one which was handsomely built of moss, grass, and lichens, and neatly lined with hair. The entrance in these cases is by the side, and the interior is profusely lined with feathers.

The late Dr. Stanley, Bishop of Norwich, in his entertaining work so often before referred to, writes, "Then for his nest—while other birds must select their own accustomed spots, the similar tree or bush, the same materials, etc., the Sparrow, like a bird who knows the world, is everywhere at home, and ready to establish himself wherever chance may happen to place him. If he lives remote from towns and cities, and the habitations of man, a tree answers his purpose, and a comfortable nest he will there build, with the rare addition of an arched top into the bargain, which possibly he may have learned from that knowing bird, the Magpie. In default of a tree or a house, a chink in a rock or a hole in a wall suits him; but after all, the nooks and eaves of buildings are his favourite resorts; accordingly in London, where he has his choice, he will often select droll places—amidst the carved foliage of some Corinthian column a projection of straws, with now and then a feather, announces a nest in preparation.

But some London Sparrows aspire still higher, one pair having actually built in the Lion's mouth, over Northumberland House, at Charing Cross. A still more extraordinary place was pitched upon by a north-coun-

try couple:—A coal vessel from Newcastle, put into Nairn, in Scotland, and, while there, two Sparrows were frequently observed to alight on the top of the vessel's mast, while the vessel remained in port. This occasioned no great surprise to the crew; but after putting to sea, the two Sparrows were seen following the sloop, and having come up with her, resumed their posts at the top of the mast. Crumbs of bread were scattered upon the deck, with a view of enticing them down, of which they soon availed themselves; and after eating heartily, again returned to the mast head. By the time the vessel had been two days at sea, they became much more familiar, and descended boldly for the purpose of feeding. The voyage was a long one, lasting for some days, when on reaching the River Tyne, to which they were bound, the nest with four young ones, was carefully taken down, and being put in the crevice of a ruined house, on the banks of the river, they continued to rear their brood.

When thus upon the subject of young Sparrows, we may direct attention to the very rapid growth of their feathers in hot weather. In the month of August, a young one was taken from a nest, with neither down nor feathers upon it, the rudiments only of plumage being visible under the skin, on the back of the head and along the back; on the sides of the wings, the shafts of the quills had just pierced the skin. Eight days after, another young one was taken from the same nest, covered with feathers, and able to make some use of its wings. Another circumstance is worthy of notice. The old ones had adapted the food to their powers of digestion. The stomach of the first was weak, and filled almost entirely with insects, only one grain of wheat and a few of sand being found. In the second,

the gizzard was become vastly more muscular, and contained nine grains of wheat whole, besides some smaller pieces, the remains of several beetles, and some larger gravel stones."

Another singular situation selected by these birds for their nest, was in a thorn bush, stuck, as one sometimes sees done, at the top of a chimney, either as a preventive of smoking, or to check the ingress of any creatures; and although it happened to be a kitchen chimney, and smoke was issuing from it throughout the whole day, there they completed their works of nidification, incubation, and probably of education. Occasionally a hedge is built in. One nest has been found in a passage, where servants were constantly passing and repassing.

I am informed by Claude A. Lillingston, Esq., of the Chauntry, Ipswich, that he has found a nest of the Sparrow in the outside of that of a Sparrow-Hawk—a singular locality with reference both to the name and the nature of the bird. "Whether," he observes, "the Hawk was keeping them till they increased in size, or whether he had come to terms of peace with them, I do not know." They also often build beneath the nests of the Rooks, with whose habits they have nothing in common, making this use of their structures as a defence for themselves, and also manifesting their sagacious anxiety and contrivance for the safety of their own broods. Frequently too they serve an action of ejectment against the Martins, and take forcible possession of the nests they have so laboriously constructed for their young, and thus is "Love's labour lost." Some have been known to build their nests in the holes made by Sand Martins in the side of a clay-pit, using, contrary to their usual custom, but a small quantity of materials, adopting probably the arrangement

they found ready for them; possibly too in such a situation the materials they ordinarily use in such abundance might not have been readily procurable.

The following appeared in the "Glasgow Argus" in May, 1846:—"Last week on the *Aurora* leaving the Bromielaw for Belfast, a Sparrow's nest was discovered in the rigging; but the birds did not choose on that occasion to accompany their nest to the Green Isle. On the return of the vessel, however, the Sparrows again visited their former abode, which had not been disturbed by the voyage, and deposited an egg in it, which attached them so much to it, that they valorously left their native land and sailed with the *Aurora* for Ireland." "The nest," Mr. Thompson adds, "rested partly on the sail, and was destroyed by its being unfurled, when containing one or two eggs. The vessel was accustomed to sail every second day from Glasgow to Belfast."

I must, however, differ from Mr. Thompson's opinion as to the honesty of the Sparrow, with regard to his neighbour's dwelling. I fear that the "Appropriation Clause" will be found on record among his "Acts," and leave a deserved stigma on his reputation.

The Sparrow pairs early in the season, and two or three broods are reared each year. A pair built a nest, and laid several eggs, at Markle, near East Linton, about the 15th. of December, 1842; a nest was found at Darley Abbey, near Derby, on the 20th. of December in the same year, containing four eggs; and on the 22nd. of the following February one was observed building its nest in the spout of the school-room at the same place, by Robert John Bell, Esq., of Mickleover House, near Derby. Sometimes, and not very rarely, I believe, even four broods have been known to be produced



in the same year. The young birds often come abroad before they are well able to provide by effective flight for their security, and thus individuals are frequently either pushed accidentally from the nests, or lose their footing and totter over, falling to the ground. Almost as soon as they are partially able to take care of themselves, they are attended by the male alone, and the female prepares again for a new family. As soon as the nest is ready, the first brood are left to themselves, but they still remain about the premises, roosting at night with other individuals either older or younger. The male birds, while the hen is sitting, roost somewhere in the neighbourhood. When the young are abroad and fed by the old ones, the latter carry themselves in an erect manner, with a sort of pride in their deportment, and the former testify their wishes with a quivering of the wings and a constant chirping.

The first set of eggs generally consists of five or six. They are dull light grey, or greyish white, much spotted and streaked all over with ash-colour and dusky brown, varying much in appearance, though preserving for the most part, a general resemblance. They also differ very frequently and very much in size and shape.

The Sparrow is a stout thick-set bird. Male; length, a little over six inches to six and a quarter; bill, bluish lead-colour. From its base, which is yellowish in winter, a black streak runs backwards to the eye. Iris, hazel, that is, dark brown; the space in front of it has the feathers tipped with grey, as are those which compose a line under the eye, and one of a deep chesnut brown over it, which latter is terminated behind by a small white dot. From the eye a broad band of chesnut brown runs down each side of the neck, meeting

together behind. Head, on the crown, fine bluish grey in the summer, but more dull, by the tips of the feathers being faded, in the autumn and winter; neck on the sides, greyish white, fading into yellowish grey, on the front black, many of the feathers tipped with grey; nape, fine dark rufous brown. Chin and throat, deep black, but many of the feathers are tipped with grey in the autumn and winter; breast, on the upper part meeting the throat, black as it also is, below, dull greyish or brownish white. Back, fine dark rufous brown on its upper part, the centre of each feather nearly black; on its lower part it is chesnut brownish grey, with a tinge of yellowish.

The wings, which expand to the width of nearly nine inches and a half, have the first three quill feathers nearly equal in length, but the third slightly longer than the first, and the second rather the longest of the three, the fourth a little shorter than the third, the fifth more than an eighth of an inch shorter than the fourth. Greater wing coverts, brownish black, broadly edged with pale rufous brown, and slightly tipped with dull white; of the lesser wing coverts, the first ones are brownish black tipped with white more or less extensively, and forming an oblique bar across each wing; sometimes half their length is of this colour; the rest are brownish red and partly black; primaries, blackish brown, with narrow outer edges of brownish yellow, and the inner more broadly margined with brownish red; tertiaries, broadly edged with rufous brown. Tail, dark brownish, the outer webs of the feathers blackish edged with lighter brown; it is rather short, and even at the end; it extends about an inch and a half beyond the closed wings; upper tail coverts, pale brownish grey with a tinge of dull green; under

tail coverts, dusky grey in the centre. Legs and toes, bluish brown; claws, darker brown, thick and short.

In the female the plumage also becomes more dull in the autumn and winter. Length, from five inches and a half to six inches; bill, brown, but paler than in the male; iris, dark brown; over it is a streak of dull yellowish, and a dusky line passes through and behind it. Head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, light dull greenish brown; chin, throat, and breast, pale dull yellowish brown, darker on the sides, the centres of the feathers darker than the rest. Back, dull brown, the edges of the feathers dull buff-colour.

The wings have the transverse band formed by the tips of the first row of the lesser wing coverts pale yellowish, or dull white; they expand to the width of nine inches and a third. Tail, brownish black, the edges of the feathers light yellowish brown; under tail coverts, dull brownish white. Legs, toes, and claws, lighter brown than in the male.

The young, when fledged, resemble the female, but are much lighter-coloured; at the first moult after the autumn, the males assume their adult plumage, but it is not till the next year that it is perfected. In the second season, the male has the bill greyish yellow or horn-colour above, and below with a faint tinge of red, the tip brown; from its base a broad band of obscure black runs down the front of the neck; in front of the eye the colour is blackish grey, and over it is a line of yellowish grey mixed with chesnut brown, extending down the neck. Head on the crown, brownish grey; the neck on the sides has some of the feathers with chesnut tips; in front it is light yellowish grey. Breast, light yellowish grey above, fading beneath into dull white; the back is light yel-

lowish brown above, the inner webs of the feathers being brownish black at the tip, lower down it is light greenish dull grey. Greater wing coverts, dusky, margined exteriorly with yellowish brown; lesser wing coverts, light brown, with a little pale yellowish brown or chesnut near the tips, and margined more broadly with yellowish brown; primaries, dusky, margined exteriorly with yellowish brown. Upper tail coverts, light greenish dull grey; under tail coverts, light yellowish grey; legs and toes, greyish yellow or horn-colour.

Variations of plumage in the Sparrow are not unfrequent. Thus, in one, the primaries and tail were white; another, shot by myself many years ago, in the parish of Taxal, Cheshire, near Chapel-on-le-Frith, Derbyshire, had some white feathers in the wings, and a few elsewhere. Another, a hen bird, was shot near Ipswich, Suffolk, of a dull white colour below, and a light cream-colour above; and another in the Butter Market in the same town, in October, 1850, with a dull white head. Specimens of an unvaried blackish brown are sometimes met with; some pure white; some cream-coloured. One white one had the red eyes which are generally seen in albinos; and the late Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, has recorded one in which the upper bill was nearly two inches long, and slightly twisted to one side, turning down also like that of the Curlew.

The plate is from a capital drawing by my friend the Rev. R. P. Alington, Rector of Swinhope, Lincolnshire.

## GREENFINCH.

GREEN GROSBEEK. GREEN LINNET.

<i>Coccothraustes chloris</i> ,	FLEMING. JARDINE.
<i>Loxia chloris</i> ,	LINNÆUS. LATHAM.
<i>Linaria chloris</i> ,	MACGILLIVRAY.
<i>Fringilla chloris</i> ,	TEMMINCK.

*Coccothraustes*. *Coccos*—A berry. *Thrauö*—To break.  
*Chloris*. *Chloros*—Light green; properly, the colour  
of young grass.

THE geographical range of the Greenfinch is extensive throughout Europe and Asia. It is found from Sweden and Norway to Belgium and Crete, and the countries bordering on the Mediterranean; in Asia Minor and other parts.

It is a plentiful species throughout the year in all the cultivated parts of England. The same remark applies to Scotland, excepting in the northern and western islands. In Ireland it is common, and resident in suitable localities. It is a winter visitant in Shetland and Orkney, frequently appearing during that season with flights of Linnets, Larks, Snow Buntings, and other birds.

About the middle of March, or earlier, they begin to move, and disperse over the length and breadth of the land, and by the middle of April they disappear from their winter haunts.



GREENFINCH.



Towards the end of autumn Greenfinches collect into flocks, frequently of considerable amount, attendant chiefly on the farm-stead or its vicinity. They by no means isolate themselves from the company of other birds, especially those of their own "order"—Chaffinches, Yellow-hammers, and others, but though not exclusive in their habits, they in general keep by themselves in straggling parties; even in summer small flocks have been seen: as many as thirty have been noticed together the last week in June. They are rather timid, though not particularly shy birds, but are easily caught, and kept in confinement.

The late William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, records in his "Natural History of Ireland," that he has known young Greenfinches, which after being kept for some little time were given their liberty every morning, and in the evening they returned as regularly to their cage to roost, as in a wild state they would have done to their favourite tree or shrub; so, he says, the Canary will also do, though but rarely.

In the spring time combats between them are frequently witnessed; at this season, too, they fly and wheel about, mostly in the morning, in a curious frolicsome manner, rising and fluttering, and then returning to the same bough many times in succession. They then resort still more nearly to the vicinity of human habitations, principally no doubt on account of the earlier shelter which plantations of evergreens afford them for building their nests, to which also in winter they mostly repair at night for harbour for themselves, returning to the same spot. They are fond of washing themselves. The old birds pay great attention to their young; and Meyer points out how, on a sudden, as I have observed myself in the case of the Rook, on a signal note being given by the former



that danger is apprehended, the latter will instantly cease their clamour, though perhaps for food. He also records the following instance of their parental affection: —“One day several little nestlings were caught in a field adjoining the garden; they were scarcely fledged, and could not fly; we put them in a small cage, which we placed in a low hedge bordering the field where they were captured. It was not long before they were discovered by the parents, who immediately visited them, and appeared to bring them food. These marks of affection interested us, and fearing that where they were placed the young nestlings might become a prey to prowling cats, we gave them their liberty. The parents, however, appeared not yet satisfied respecting the safety of their young ones, for a short time after they were observed in the act of carrying one of them away; they were bearing it between them at about the elevation of a foot and a half from the ground, and in this manner were seen to carry it above fifty yards, namely, from the spot where the young birds were set at liberty, to the end of a gravel path, where they entered a clump of fir trees. In what manner the parents supported the nestling was not very apparent, as the observers did not like to follow too quickly, lest the old birds should relinquish their burden; but from the close vicinity of the three during their flight, it appeared as if they must have upheld it by means of their beaks. The other nestlings had apparently been conveyed away in the same manner, as none of them were to be found.” I remember myself several years ago going a mile at night to release some young Greenfinches from a cage in which I had seen the old birds feeding them the day before.

Their flight is quick, strong, and undulated, performed by two or three rapid flaps of the wings, which are

then closed, and a sweep follows, down, and then up. They sometimes wheel about for some little time before alighting, but often settle down abruptly, and set to work in search of food. If alarmed, they fly up to the highest parts of any trees that may be near, from whence they drop again when the danger appears to be removed.

Their food consists of wheat, barley, and other grain, and seeds, those of the hawthorn occasionally, and green weeds, such as the turnip, charlock, dandelion, groundsel, and chickweed; and in the spring the buds of trees are picked off, and the larvæ of different insects also consumed: all these, as well as insects themselves, form their "bill of fare:" with the latter the young are fed. Various mineral substances are swallowed to assist the process of digestion. The husks of corn are ground off before being swallowed.

Their note, which Meyer likens to the word 'tway,' is tolerably full and mellow, and is uttered in the summer from the topmost spray of a hedge, or some tree a little higher than others, as well as on the wing; but there is not any approach to a song until the spring, generally about the middle of April, but earlier or later according to the season, and only to a trifling extent even then; but they are able to learn the notes of other birds.

Nidification begins generally in April, or even earlier: the work has been known to have been completed by the 26th. of March.

The nest is pretty well compacted, and much more so in some instances than in others. It is composed of small roots, twigs, moss, and straws, and lined with finer materials of the same kinds, mingled, as the case may be, with thistle-down, feathers, and hair: one was built last year in the trellis-work near the

drawing-room of Nafferton Vicarage, a few yards from that of the Spotted Flycatcher; but though undisturbed, it was not resorted to again this year, as was that of its near neighbour. It is placed in various situations—a low bush, or an evergreen, the ivy against a wall, or between the branches of a tree. Many nests are often found in propinquity to each other in the same shrubbery; more than one sometimes even in the same bush.

The eggs, from four to six, or even seven in number, are of a bluish or purple reddish white, spotted with darker purple, grey, and blackish brown, streaked also in general more or less with black. They differ much in size, shape, and colour; sometimes the whole surface is mottled over, and again, there have been known no markings at all: the smaller end is rather pointed.

Two broods are frequently reared in the season. The young, if fledged, fly off in a body from the nest, if approached. The young of the Spotted Flycatcher I have seen do the same, though they had never flown before, on my going to the nest to place a young orphan Greenfinch in it, with a view to its being fed with them as a foster-brother.

Male; weight, nearly eight drachms; length, six inches and a quarter, or rather over; bill, pale reddish brown, darker at the point, the back of the lower bill tinged with red; iris, dark hazel: between it and the bill is a dusky mark, which also extends across the forehead. Head on the sides, yellowish green, inclining to ash-colour, and on the crown, neck on the back, which also inclines to ash-colour, and nape, yellowish green, the edges of the feathers greyish; chin, throat, and breast, yellowish green, but lighter than the back, and with more yellow, much the most so on the

lower part; on the sides it is tinged with greenish grey; back, yellowish green, the edges of the feathers greyish, but lower down with more yellow.

The wings are broad, and expand to the width of ten inches and a quarter; the first, second, and third quill feathers are nearly equal and the longest, the fourth nearly as long; greater wing coverts, greenish grey; lesser wing coverts, the same; primaries, brownish black with light grey tips, and yellowish white inner edges, excepting towards the end; those next the body are greyish; tertiaries, greenish grey. Tail, rather short and somewhat forked, yellow for three-fourths of its length, the remainder brownish black, edged with yellow or yellowish grey, but the four middle feathers are nearly all brownish black, being tinged with green at the base only; under tail coverts, light yellowish white. Legs and toes, pale reddish brown; claws, rather dusky.

The female is about six inches in length; bill, less robust than in the male. Her general plumage is much the same, but considerably duller, and with none of the bright yellow. The back has more brown, of an uniform faint reddish tint. The wings expand to the width of ten inches; the yellow markings on the quill feathers are less bright than in the male; lesser wing coverts, grey.

The young at first are greenish grey above, and streaked with dark brown on the throat and breast. As the bird advances in age it varies much in brightness or dullness of colouring, the more advanced being almost pure greenish yellow above, the others tinged with brown, and the sides of the head being more or less grey. Bill, pale brown above, pale reddish beneath, the tip brown: in the female it is still paler

than in the male, and smaller. Neck in front, greyish brown; breast, greyish brown above, below, greyish brown, as are its sides; back, dull olive-colour, the centre of each feather faintly tinged with brown. Lesser wing coverts, brown; primaries, dusky brown, their outer margins greenish yellow, but narrow, forming only lines when closed, instead of a full mark. Legs and toes, pale brownish red.





HAWFINCH.

## HAWFINCH.

GROSBEAK. COMMON GROSBEAK.

BLACK-THROATED GROSBEAK. HAW GROSBEAK.

<i>Coccothraustes vulgaris</i> ,	FLEMING. GOULD.
<i>Loxia coccothraustes</i> ,	LINNÆUS. LATHAM.
<i>Fringilla coccothraustes</i> ,	JENYNS. TEMMINCK.

*Coccothraustes*—*Cocco*—A berry. *Thrauö*—To break.  
*Vulgaris*—Common.

THE Hawfinch occurs throughout Europe, in Germany, France, Belgium, Spain, and Italy, as likewise, though more rarely, in Sweden, Denmark, Siberia, and Russia. In Asia also, according to Temminck, who includes it among the birds of Japan, and in Africa, in Egypt, where Sonnini relates that he saw it.

In Yorkshire, specimens have been met with near Sheffield, Killinbeck, near Leeds; Scriven, near Knaresborough; Halifax, York, Huddersfield, Barnsley, and Doncaster, in the West-Riding; and a few are generally killed every winter near Bridlington, in the East-Riding.

One was shot in the vicarage garden of Coddendam, Suffolk, about the middle of January, 1850; so John Longe, Esq. has informed me. In 1849, the Rev. R. P. Alington shot one in his garden at Swinhope Rectory, Lincolnshire, and heard of several others in the same neighbourhood. He says of the one that he procured, "It came to feed on the gravel walk: upon my appear-



ance, it would fly to the topmost branch of a neighbouring tree, and before I could get within gun-shot, would fall like a stone among the laurel bushes, from whence I at last found it so difficult to dislodge it, that I was obliged to get a man on the other side with a stick to drive it out." Two or three have been shot at Notting Hill, near London; one near Esher, Surrey. N. Rowe, Esq., of Worcester College, Oxford, says that he has been informed that this species is common in Stowe Park, Buckinghamshire, the seat of his Grace the Duke of Buckingham; and James Dalton, Esq., of Worcester College, Oxford, has informed me that it breeds there, as it also does in Epping Forest, in considerable numbers, and at Walthamstow, in Essex, and the neighbourhood of Woburn, in Bedfordshire, as Mr. G. B. Clarke, of that place, writes me word; but he says that they are there most seen in the winter, when they come to feed on the seeds of the hawthorn and the holly, their "Christmas Tree." On one occasion they have been known to breed near Oxford.

At Windsor, and at Bradfield, near Reading, Berkshire, it remains throughout the year, as the Rev. Thomas Stevens, of that place, told me, and has also been known to breed regularly in the grounds of Lord Clifden, at Rochampton, and near Tenterden, Bexley, Dartford, Maidstone, and Penshurst, in Kent. It has also been seen in Badminton Park, Gloucestershire, the seat of his Grace the Duke of Beaufort; Tring and Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire; Chipping Norton and Wytham, in Oxfordshire; Goodwood and Rye, in Sussex, in plenty near the latter in 1849. Selborne, in Hampshire; Repton and Melbourne, in Derbyshire; Taverham, where one was taken alive in a pigeon-house, and Yarmouth, Norfolk; Ormskirk, in Lancashire; and

once at Woodside, near Carlisle, in Cumberland; also occasionally in Gloucestershire, Shropshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Cornwall, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire.

In Ireland, a few have been met with in various parts; at Hillsborough and Tollymore Park, the seat of Lord Roden, in the county of Down; at Cittadella and Ardrum, in the county of Cork, the former in the winter of 1844; near Milltown, in the county of Kerry, at the end of October, 1830; and during the winter of 1844, the species was obtained in different parts of that county; but in the Phoenix Park, near Dublin, where the hawthorn trees are both among the finest and in the greatest numbers that I have ever seen, they appear to be procurable in small numbers every winter.

In Scotland, one or two have been killed in Dumfriesshire. In Orkney and Shetland it appears to be unknown.

It is with us both a permanent resident and an occasional visitant, the former in some parts of the country, the latter in others. It arrives in these cases at the beginning of winter, and is said to depart again in April.

They seem to be extremely shy birds, but are capable of being kept in the cage. In winter they are found less timid, either subdued by the effects of hunger and cold, or as arrived from foreign parts where they have been less exposed to danger from man. They generally perch upon the highest branch of a tree, or upon some open bough, from whence they are able to keep a good look out.

They feed on the seeds, fruits, and berries of various trees—the hornbeam, plum, plane, pine, cherry, laurel, holly, and hawthorn, and do some damage among peas. With their strong beaks they make their way through the hardest shells.

Their song is described as low, pleasant, and plaintive, and as being heard even in winter in fine weather. In confinement they have been known to learn the notes of other birds, and have been observed to make a grinding noise with their beaks, as is done by some of the Parrots.

They pair about the middle of April, and in a week or two begin to build.

I have been favoured by St. Aubin Molesworth St. Aubin, Esq., with the nest and egg of this bird, which were taken in the parish of Beenham, in the county of Berks.: it is entirely composed of lichens and fine roots. It is frequently placed in a thorn bush, or holly tree, as also in oaks, the horse chesnut, apple, and fir trees of the different species, at a height of twenty-five or thirty feet from the ground, often in a very exposed situation. It is variously made of small twigs, such as those of the oak and honeysuckle, intermixed with fragments of lichens, in greater or less abundance. The lining consists of fine roots, vegetable fibres, and a little hair, with feathers according to Montagu. It is not firmly compacted, towards which effect perhaps the principal material contributes.

The eggs are from four to six in number, of a pale olive green, spotted with blackish brown, and irregularly streaked with dusky grey; some are much less marked than others, and some are of a uniform pale green.

The young are hatched about the third week in May, and as soon as they are able to provide for themselves, says Mr. Doubleday, they unite with the old birds in flocks, varying in numbers from fifteen or twenty to one hundred or even to two hundred individuals. In this manner they remain through the winter, and only separate at the approach of spring.

Male; weight, about two ounces; length, a trifle over seven inches; bill, pale brownish red, bluish in summer, the tip dusky: between it and the eye is a black streak, meeting the black of the throat in a point. Iris, greyish white: the black mark just extends behind it. Head, yellowish brown, paler on the forehead and the sides than on the crown; the neck behind is crossed by a broad band of ash-colour, on the sides it is pale brown; nape, fawn-colour; chin and throat, velvet black; breast, pale brown; back above, dark chesnut brown, next brownish grey, changing downwards to yellowish brown.

The wings, which are of the width of eleven inches and a half, are broad; the first quill feather is a little shorter than the second, as is also the third, the fourth a little shorter still, and the rest gradually diminish in length; greater wing coverts, greyish white, and those next the body yellowish brown; lesser wing coverts, black, or blackish brown, some of them tipped with white; primaries, bluish black, the outer ones with a white spot on the inner web near the middle, the others greyish white: the fifth and four succeeding ones are curiously formed in the shape of a bill-hook or battle-axe at the end; the other quill feathers nearer the body are square at the end. The secondaries, which are long, have the greater part of the inner web greyish white; some of the tertiaries rich chesnut brown. Tail, short and black; the outside feather on each side is black at the base, and on the outer web, and half of the inner web, white; the next four feathers on each side have a large white spot on the end of both webs, the base black, the proportion of white diminishing on each feather; the middle ones are grey towards the end, and tinged with red on part of the

inner web, the tips white: the two centre feathers are rather shorter than the rest. Upper tail coverts, yellowish brown; under tail coverts, white; legs, toes, and claws, pale brownish red.

The female is in length rather under seven inches; she is like the male in appearance, but paler in colour; the black at the base of the bill, and between it and the eye, is less conspicuous; the different colours about the head, crown, and neck on the back, are less distinct and more blended together; the black on the chin is also less in size. The wing coverts have the white colour more mixed with brown; the tertiaries have their outer webs bluish grey.

The young bird is said to have the bill pale brownish red; head, neck, and nape, pale yellowish olive brown; throat, yellowish, bounded by a small line of brown spots, indicative of the future black patch; the breast, dull white, the feathers, especially on the sides, tipped with small brown spots. The bar on the wings is less apparent than in the old birds.

Varieties occur which are pure white, some yellowish white, or greyish; others with the wings or tail white, and others with white feathers here or there.





GOLDFINCH.

## GOLDFINCH.

GOLDIE. GOLDSPIK. THISTLE-FINCH. KING HARRY.  
RED-CAP. PROUD-TAIL.

*Carduelis elegans*,  
*Fringilla carduelis*,

MACGILLIVRAY.  
LINNÆUS. LATHAM.

*Carduelis*—A bird that feeds on thistles. *Carduus*—A thistle.  
*Elegans*—Elegant.

THIS lovely bird is one of the most beautifully-plumaged of our native species; its form at the same time is neat and graceful, and its gay exterior is accompanied by gentleness of nature, docility of habit, and sweetness of song. It need therefore hardly be added that it is a deserved favourite, and one only regrets to see it ever otherwise than in the cheerful enjoyment of its natural liberty. Individuals have been known to live ten years in captivity, continuing in song the greater part of each year. Willughby mentions one which lived in confinement for twenty-three years.

In Europe it occurs from Siberia and Sweden to Greece, France, Spain, Crete, and Italy; in Asia also, in Asia Minor.

In this country it is found in sufficient plenty throughout England and Wales, as also in the south of Scotland, but is certainly not so numerous as formerly. Whomsoever else "Free trade" may be beneficial to, it



is not so to the Goldfinch; for "Agricultural improvement," necessitated thereby, cuts off with the tops of the thistles so ready otherwise to run to seed, the harvest which the bird would fain reap in the autumn and the winter. Those tracts, therefore, which still remain in their original and uncultivated state, and furnish accordingly the greater quantity of wild seed-bearing plants, are their most natural resort—the uncultivated common, the now almost extirpated warren, the chase, the moorland, and the wild waste of the mountain side.

In Scotland it is not uncommon in Aberdeenshire, and near Elgin, but is said to be rare in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and to be so now in Linlithgowshire, though formerly very abundant there. It is an occasional visitant to Zetland.

In Ireland it occurs throughout the four provinces; but Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, has remarked how capricious it is in its comings and goings.

They abide with us throughout the year, but roam about the country, and appear to be observed in the greatest numbers together in the spring: the flocks generally consist of not more than twenty or thirty.

In procuring its food, the Goldfinch often permits your near approach, seeming regardless of it, intent upon its one main object. It is very pleasant to watch them fluttering over the stems of the thistle, hanging on in various attitudes about them, and scattering about the down in picking out the seeds. On a sudden the little flock, probably the family of the summer, flit off, twittering their lively notes.

They are easily tamed, and have been taught by those who might employ their time much more profitably, to perform various tricks. They are sometimes

seen in large, and sometimes in very small, but generally in moderate-sized flocks, and they also associate occasionally with Linnets. Severe winters prove fatal to many. In their wild state two instances have been known of the female pairing with the Greenfinch, and rearing the young, and in confinement with the Siskin and the Canary. They roost in trees.

The late William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, records that Randal Burough, Esq., of the county of Clare, had two tame Goldfinches which were allowed not only to fly about the room, but also through the open window. The winter was beginning to be severe, and the food suitable for small birds consequently scarce, when one day the two birds brought with them a stranger of their own species, who made bold to go into the two cages that were always left open, and regale himself on the hospitality of his new friends, and then took his departure. He returned again, and brought others with him, so that in a few days half-a-dozen were enjoying the food provided for them. The window was now kept up, and the open cages, with plenty of seed, were placed on a table close to it, instead of on the sill as before. The birds soon learned to come into the room without fear, and as their numbers had continued gradually to increase, there was soon a flock of not less than twenty visiting the apartment daily, and perfectly undisturbed by the presence of the members of the family. As the inclemency of the winter decreased, the number of the birds gradually diminished, until at length, when the severe weather had quite passed away, there remained none except the original pair.

Their food consists of the seeds of the teazel, the plantain, knapweed, chickweed, groundsel, ragwort,

hemp, the thistle, the hawthorn, corn, fir-cones, grasses, and various herbaceous plants: occasionally also of beetles and other insects, which are triturated with small gravel. The young birds are fed for a time with caterpillars and insects.

The note, as is so well known, is very sweet and varied. It is commenced about the end of March, and is continued without much interruption till July.

The nest is placed in orchard and other trees, especially those which are evergreen, in bushes, and in some instances in hedges, and at times as much as thirty feet from the ground: it is composed externally of grass, moss, lichens, small twigs, and roots, or any other appropriate substances. Inside it is elaborately interwoven with wool and hair, lined with the down of willows and various plants, and sometimes a few or more leaves or feathers. It is very neatly finished, and Bolton says is completed in three days.

The eggs, four or five in number, are bluish white, or pale greyish blue, sometimes tinged with brown, and are slightly spotted with greyish purple and brown, with occasionally a dark streak or two.

Male; length, five inches; bill, whitish tinged with red, the point above and below, blackish brown: it is margined at its base with black to the eye, which is dusky brown. Forehead, crimson, and over the eyes; head on the crown and back, black, on the sides white; neck on the back, black, forming a semicircle towards the front; nape, buff brown; chin, crimson; throat, white, extending backwards to the black, and succeeded by brownish white: breast, pale fulvous brown and whitish; back, darker buff brown, lighter buff brown lower down.

The wings extend to the width of nine inches; greater wing coverts, yellow; lesser wing coverts, black; prima-

ries, black, the inner half yellow on the outer webs, except that of the first, the tips white; the second quill feather is the longest, but only slightly over the first, which is a little longer than the third; tertiaries, with a spot of white at the tip; greater and lesser under wing coverts, white. The tail, which is black tipped with white, is slightly forked and rather short; the two outer feathers have a large oval-shaped white spot on the inner web; upper tail coverts, greyish white. Legs and toes, pale dusky brown; claws, dusky brown.

The female is not so brilliant in colour; length, rather over four inches and three-quarters; the head has less crimson on the crown, and it is frequently mingled with black, and the black is mixed with grey and brown; the white on the side of the neck is tinged with brown. The chin has less crimson; the breast duller white on the lower part. The wings expand to the width of a little over eight inches and three-quarters; the white tips of the feathers are tinged with brown, and the black is less deep; lesser wing coverts, brown; the tail is not so bright a black.

The young present in some respects, the same general appearance as the old birds, but the colours are fainter. The bill, pale pink; the head, on the crown, has the black much mixed with grey, and the rest brown; the black comes out about the end of September, or beginning of October, and the red at the end of that month. Neck on the back, and nape, greyish brown; the breast, brownish grey.

Montagu says that a variety is sometimes taken with white spots under the throat. In confinement varieties occur, black, black and white, and white.

## SISKIN.

ABERDEVINE.

*Carduelis spinus*,  
*Fringilla spinus*,

MACGILLIVRAY.  
 LINNÆUS. LATHAM.

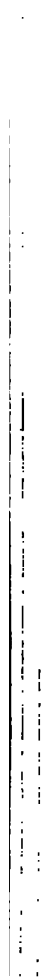
*Carduelis*—A bird that feeds on thistles. *Carduus*—A thistle.  
*Spinus*—.....?      *Spinus*—A thorn. ?

THOUGH inferior to the Goldfinch in beauty of plumage, the Siskin is its equal in pleasing neatness—the one, as it were, embodying the striking beauty of the orange, and the other the more chastened and sober hue of the lemon, in the general tone of its colour.

It inhabits Russia, Norway, and Sweden, Austria, France, Holland, and Italy, and has been once met with in Corfu; it is found also in Asia, in Japan, according to M. Temminck.

In this country it is but locally distributed, and therefore an uncommon bird, though found in tolerable plenty where, or rather when, it occurs. In Yorkshire it is tolerably common in some winters near Sheffield, Halifax, Doncaster, Barnsley, Hebden-Bridge, and York, as also in the neighbourhood of Bridlington. When at school, at Bromsgrove, in Worcestershire, I and my schoolfellows used to shoot several of these birds out of pretty considerable flocks, which used occasionally





to frequent the gardens near the town, and more generally the alder trees by the side of Charford brook. I just missed seeing them in April this year, 1852, in the same neighbourhood, namely, at Stoke Prior, lower down the said stream, where my friend the Rev. Harcourt Aldham, vicar of that parish, had seen a flock several times just before I visited him. They were, as usual, hanging about the alder trees which fringe the borders of the brook. The Rev. R. P. Alington has only known one near Swinhope, Lincolnshire, which he saw in the marshes. In Surrey, Cambridgeshire, Sussex, Salop, Dorset, Devon, Suffolk, Norfolk, Durham, Northumberland, Lancashire, and Cornwall, they are more or less frequently met with.

In Scotland they are, on the whole, rare, though they are believed to breed there, and considerable numbers have occasionally been observed in Edinburghshire, Perthshire, Selkirkshire, and East Lothian.

In Ireland it is also an occasional visitor, and has been noticed near Belfast, Ballymena, Lough Mask, Armagh, Rockland, Mertoun, Cork, Tanderagee, Antrim, Ranelagh, and Dublin, and in the counties of Wicklow, Cavan, Wexford, and Londonderry.

The Siskin, with us, migrates from the north to the south in the autumn, leaving in September, and returning in April. A few have been known to breed in the latter portion of the island, and more in the former. Mr. Yarrell mentions two such instances near London, and Mr. Meyer two others, both in Coombe wood, in the same neighbourhood. Near Lancaster, several pairs remained and bred in the summer of 1836. In Scotland a few pairs breed in different parts every season, and have been noticed at New Abbey, in Galloway, Killin, Inverary, the Vale of Alford,



Aberdeenshire and Argyleshire, Camperdown, near Dundee, and on the borders of Lough Fine.

They are companionable birds with each other, going in flocks, in association also not unfrequently with others of their "country cousins," the Linnets of the smaller and the larger species. In confinement they shew great affection for their mates, and pair with the Canary. They are almost constantly in motion, both in their wild and confined state.

Their food consists of the seeds of the alder, the sycamore, the beech, the broom, the thistle, the dandelion, the ragwort, and those of other plants and trees.

Their song is sweet, and much esteemed; and a pleasant thing it is to hear this "Bonnie wee thing" twittering its small note, as it hangs in every variety of attitude on the alder, or flits from bough to bough, or tree to tree, in search of its accustomed food.

The nest is placed in trees, at only a short or moderate height from the ground, and is composed of stalks of grass, and small roots and fibres, moss and lichens, lined with hair, rabbit's fur, thistle-down, wool, or a few feathers.

The eggs are pale greenish white, spotted around the thicker end with purple, and a few brown dots.

Incubation lasts fourteen days; the young are fledged in fifteen more, and are able to leave the nest at the end of the third week.

Male; length, four inches and three-quarters; bill, light grey above, and dull white below, the tip dusky; in summer it is orange brown: it is rather long and pointed, and much attenuated towards the tip, which is slightly curved downwards—a sort of rudiment, as it were, of that of the Crecper; the upper mandible extends a little beyond the lower one. Iris, dusky

brown: a yellow band extends over and from it backwards, and in front of it, to the bill, is black. Head on the back and sides, yellowish green, streaked with black; crown, black; neck on the back and nape, yellowish green, streaked with black; in front, yellow. Chin and throat, black, when fully adult; breast, yellowish green, whitish at the lower part, and greyish white on the sides, each feather with a black central streak. Back above, yellowish green, tinged with grey, each feather having a dusky streak in its centre; below, yellow.

The wings, which extend to within half an inch of the end of the tail, expand to the width of nine inches; the first three quills are of nearly equal length and the longest in the wing, the first being rather the longest of the three; the fourth an eighth shorter than the third; greater wing coverts, yellow at the base, black at the tip; lesser wing coverts, black, greenish yellow at the end, forming a broad band of that colour across the wing. Primaries, dusky black, yellow at the base and on the outer edges; secondaries and tertiaries, dusky black, with olive-coloured edges. The tail, which is slightly forked, is yellow at the base, black at the end, the edges of the feathers narrowly edged with lighter colour; the two middle feathers brownish black; upper tail coverts, yellow, or yellowish brown; under tail coverts, greyish white, tinged with yellow, the shafts dark. Legs, toes, and claws, pale brown, with a reddish tinge.

After the autumnal moult the yellow is less brilliant, and the black of the head is obscured with brown.

Female; length, not quite four inches and a half. The bill is pale brown above and lighter beneath. The yellow streak over the eye is very pale. Head on the

sides, pale yellowish brown; crown, neck on the back, and nape, light greyish green, each feather with a brownish black central mark; chin, throat, and breast above, greenish white, tinged with yellow, in the middle bluish white, below greyish white, each feather with a longitudinal streak of blackish; back, light greyish green, tinged with blue, each feather with a brownish black central streak. The yellow on the wing feathers is paler than in the male. Tail, yellow, but less extensively, and the black at the end is tinged with brown; under tail coverts, white, with dark shaft streaks. Toes, light brown.

The young are at first covered with black down. The male, after the first moult, has the black on the head margined with brown, and the colours are less bright than when mature.

If kept in confinement the Siskin sometimes varies to white or dusky, and Bechstein says that in very old males the whole breast becomes black.





LINNET.

19

## LINNET.

BROWN LINNET. COMMON LINNET.

GREATER REDPOLE. RED-BREASTED LINNET. GREY LINNET.

ROSE LINNET. WHIN LINNET.

<i>Linaria cannabina</i> ,	MACGILLIVRAY.
<i>Fringilla cannabina</i> ,	LINNEUS. LATHAM.
<i>Fringilla Linota</i> ,	LATHAM.
<i>Linota cannabina</i> ,	PRINCE OF MUSEGNANO. YARRELL.

*Linaria*—*Linum*—Flax. *Cannabina*—Belonging to canes or reeds. *Canna*—A cane or reed.

THIS species is an inhabitant of Europe, being found in Denmark, Russia, Norway, and Sweden; France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Germany, Crete, Corfu, and other islands of the Mediterranean, and the Levant; as also in Asia, throughout Asia Minor, Persia, and in Japan, according to Temminck.

In this country it is generally distributed throughout the year in England, Scotland, Ireland, Orkney, and Zetland.

The Linnet is easily reared from the nest.

Towards the end of autumn individuals collect together in flocks, and these again as winter advances, further unite, often to their own destruction; a too dense crowding together proving fatal to them as well as to their superiors in the scale of creation. I remember picking up nine which I once shot in Berkshire;

and I saw in the newspaper a few years since, that, 'si rite recorder,' upwards of a hundred and forty were killed at one fell discharge. Sometimes they join with other birds of the Finch tribe, but generally keep to themselves. In spring the flocks break up, and leave, for the most part, the cultivated districts of the country, to which they had betaken themselves, for the more hilly and mountainous regions of the north; rejoicing in the wild heather, the gorse, the broom, and the sloe. A few build in the south, but not farther than Thetford, Barham, and Calford, Norfolk, so far as I am aware, where Alfred Newton, Esq. has found the nests. In winter they may often be seen on the sea shore, as well as in the stubble fields.

The Rev. J. Pemberton Bartlett, curate of Fordingbridge, Hampshire, has sent me the following anecdote of a Linnet. He says, "In passing a low furze bush, my attention was attracted to a bird which fluttered and fell a few feet before me, as if in a fit. My first impulse was to step quickly forward and pick it up, the former of which I did, but when within about two feet of it, it rose and fluttered on a few yards further. Thinking it was wounded I again attempted to pick it up, when it again appeared to receive a fresh amount of strength, and made another intoxicated sort of progress of a few yards. This it did several times, and I began to doubt if I should catch it after all; when at last, to my great surprise, just as I was near enough to "put some salt on its tail," it rose up and flew away, twittering, (laughing at me as I found afterwards,) like the pertest and strongest Linnet in the world. At first I was puzzled to account for its very eccentric behaviour, but it struck me that possibly, like the Partridge, it might have performed the antics

described to decoy me from its nest. I therefore returned, and searched the furze bush, where, sure enough, I found it with five eggs, which were still warm from the heat of that body which the faithful little bird had exposed for their preservation; for had I been so disposed, I could, with my stick, without difficulty, have knocked her down. This trait in the character of the Linnet was new to me, and delighted me much."

The flight of this bird is quick and undulated—a series of curves performed by the alternate flappings and cessation of the motion of the wings. In flocks they glide and wheel about in a manner which, to the ornithologist, is pleasing to behold. On the ground, too, they are quick and sprightly in their movements, advancing by short leaps.

Its food consists of the seeds of various plants—the dandelion, the sow-thistle, the thistle, rape, flax, and such like.

The note is soft, mellow, varied, and sweet, so that it is valued, unfortunately for it, as a cage bird, possessing, as it also does, the power to imitate the notes of others, even of the Nightingale; nay, to utter distinct sounds and articulate words. A fine voice has proved the ruin of many, and not only of birds. Meyer suggests that its name of "Linnet," is derived from its ordinary call.

The nest is commonly placed in heath, grass, furze, or gorse, and is neatly constructed, being formed of small twigs and stalks of grass, intermixed with moss and wool, and lined with hair and feathers. It is occasionally placed in a bush or tree, and has been known at a height of ten or twelve feet from the ground.



The eggs are from four to six in number, of a bluish white colour, spotted, most so at the larger end, with purple grey and reddish brown; some are of a reddish black colour without spots, and some, exceptional ones, have been known pure white.

The young are usually able to fly by the end of May, and there are mostly two broods in the season.

Male; length, five inches and three-quarters; bill, dusky above, pale greyish blue beneath, the tip darker; iris, deep brown: over it is an indistinct line of greyish yellow, and another below it. Forehead, red, the feathers tipped with greyish brown; head, streaked on the crown with greyish brown and yellowish grey, the central part of each feather being of the former colour; on the sides, yellowish brown grey; neck in front, yellowish grey, streaked with greyish brown or light reddish brown; chin and throat, a mixture of brown and grey; breast, brown or dull red on the upper part in winter, bright red in spring—sometimes the red colour entirely fades out in the winter—the feathers are broadly margined with yellowish grey; on the sides it is yellowish grey, the feathers streaked with brown, which nearly wears off in summer; lower down it is light brownish grey, palest on the middle. Back, deep reddish brown, the central parts of the feathers darker, their edges yellowish grey.

The wings expand to the width of nine inches and three-quarters; greater and lesser wing coverts, reddish brown, the central parts of the feathers darker, their edges yellowish grey; in the summer they are wholly reddish brown; primaries, brownish black, margined externally, excepting towards the end, with white, the five first broadly so, forming a conspicuous mark on the wing: the first and second quills are equal in

length, the first sometimes the longest, the third scarcely shorter, the fourth a quarter of an inch shorter than the third. Secondaries and tertiaries, brownish black, margined externally with yellowish brown, internally with greyish white. Tail, brownish black, the middle feathers, which are shorter than the others, and make it forked, are margined with brownish yellow, the five side ones edged externally, nearly to the tip, with white, and internally more broadly with the same; upper tail coverts, brownish black, margined with brownish yellow; underneath, the tail is barred with grey and white; under tail coverts, whitish, their central part dusky. Legs and toes, yellowish brown; claws, blackish.

Female; length, five inches and a quarter; neck in front, yellowish grey, tinged with red; throat, streaked on the sides with dusky brown; breast, yellowish grey, slightly tinged with red; back, streaked with dusky brown and greyish yellow, lighter lower down; in winter greyish or greyish white. The wings extend to the width of nine inches and an half; greater and lesser wing coverts, dull brown, edged with lighter, fading off downwards into whitish, and streaked on the sides with dusky brown; primaries, brownish black, narrowly edged on the outside with white. The tail, brownish black, edged externally with light yellowish brown; the outer with greyish white, the inner webs greyish white for half their length; upper tail coverts, dusky brown, the outer edges of the feathers yellowish, the inner whitish; under tail coverts, yellowish grey, with a blackish mark on the centre of the feathers.

The young at first resemble the female. The bill is pale greyish brown above, and pale bluish pink beneath; breast, greyish yellow, streaked with brown, excepting

on the middle; the back, yellowish grey, streaked with dusky; toes, pale brownish pink; claws, brown.

Alfred Newton, Esq., of Magdalene College, Cambridge, thus describes one in the "Zoologist," pages 1497-1498, which was only just able to fly:—"Bill, pale brown, the upper one the darkest; head and nape, dull white, each feather having a dark centre; neck in front and breast above, dull white, each feather tipped with dark brown; below, silvery white; back, dark brown, each feather margined with lighter. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dark brown, with buff tips, forming two conspicuous bars across the wing; quill feathers, greyish black, the inner ones with a broad buff outer edge; tail, greyish black, the feathers broadly edged with buff on their outer edges; upper tail coverts, dark brown, each feather margined with lighter; under tail coverts, silvery white, each feather with a dark stripe; legs and toes, pale brown; claws, black."

Mr. George B. Clarke, of Woburn, Bedfordshire, has written me word that in the winter of the year 1845, a person of that town caught a male bird of this species nearly white. He kept it in confinement for nearly four years, during which period it became as white as snow. It was perfectly healthy, and was a good songster.





PLATE 1.

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## REDPOLE.

LESSER REDPOLE. LESSER REDPOLE LINNET.

*Linaria minor*,  
*Fringilla linaria*,MACGILLIVRAY.  
LINNÆUS. LATHAM.*Linaria*—*Linum*—Flax.    *Minor*—Lesser.

THE Lesser Redpole inhabits the north of Europe—Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and even the gelid Spitzbergen, Kamtschatka, Iceland, and Siberia—and as far south as Italy. In North America also it is plentiful, if indeed the species be the same; and, according to Temminck, is found in Asia, in Japan.

It is a denizen of the three kingdoms, and is found in Orkney, where a flock of about fifty were observed at Westness in October, 1847.

It is resident throughout the year in the north of England, Ireland, and Scotland, but in the winter only, except in occasional instances, is seen in the south.

In winter they form large flocks, sometimes of thousands, and frequent woods where birch and alder trees are found. They are gentle and lively birds, and, unless scared, may be nearly approached: they will even return to the same trees immediately after having been fired at. They are very easily kept in confinement, and have been known to breed in the aviary of W. Roger, Esq., of Uxbridge. The female

is very devoted to her young. One has been taken off the nest with the hand, and would not forsake it when released; she

"Could not bid the spot adieu;  
It was dear still 'midst her woes."

Their food consists of the seeds of the turnip, the thistle, the poppy, dandelion, mosses, and other plants; the birch, the alder, and other trees; and they also destroy many buds, probably in seeking for insects hid among them. Like the Titmice, they assume a variety of interesting positions in hanging on the small and flexible boughs which bend beneath their light weight when gaining their livelihood. Audubon says of them, "Few birds display a more affectionate disposition than the Little Redpole, and it was pleasing to see several on a twig feeding each other by passing a seed from bill to bill, one individual sometimes receiving from his two neighbours at the same time." Occasionally they will descend to the ground in examination of the cones which have fallen down.

The flight of this little bird is particularly light, nimble, and buoyant.

Its voice is very clear and loud, and in the spring sweet and pleasing. If disturbed, it utters at first on rising a hurried chatter, and as it flies away a single and more prolonged note.

It breeds in various northern parts of the hilly districts of Scotland and the north of England, and many other places. The nest has in two recorded instances been known so far south as Halifax, in Yorkshire, namely, in 1835 and 1836; but the fact is that it is to be found plentifully in that district, and no doubt in many others, every summer. Once in Oxfordshire, by the Revs. Andrew and Henry Matthews;

twice at Melbourne, in Derbyshire, by J. J. Briggs, Esq; thrice near Downham, and twice near Thetford, in Norfolk, in 1846, by C. B. Hunter, Esq.; and at Bramerton, Costessey, and Mousehold Heath, near Norwich, as Mr. Henry Bellars has informed me. Once at Shanklin Chine, in the Isle of Wight, in May, 1843, by the Rev. C. A. Bury, and another was found there at the same time; also in Surrey, Nottinghamshire, and Warwickshire.

The young are hatched rather late, and are seldom able to fly before the end of June or beginning of July.

The nest is built in a low bush or tree, such as an alder, hawthorn, hazel, or willow, or in heather, and is fabricated of moss, stems of grass, and willow catkins, the latter being also used for the lining, as also feathers.

This species lays from four to six eggs: their colour is pale bluish green, spotted with orange brown, principally towards the larger end, with sometimes a few thin streaks of a darker colour—brown or black.

Male; weight, two drachms and a half; length, rather under five inches; bill, above, greyish brown, the lower one yellowish, the point blackish; iris, dusky brown. The forehead, which is dull red in winter, crimson in summer, is edged by a blackish band, the tips of the feathers being yellowish grey, and the rest black; crown, a mixture of dark and light brown, the centre of each feather being the darkest; neck in front, pale brown, with dark streaks; on the sides the same; chin, with a patch of black; throat in front, blackish, the tips of the feathers being yellowish grey in winter, and the rest black; on the sides it is pale brown with dark streaks; breast, pale brown, with dark streaks; in



the summer fine red above and on the sides, fainter downwards, pale brownish white in winter: the sides the most streaked. Back, yellowish brown, streaked with blackish brown, darkest in summer; over the tail dull red, in summer much brighter.

The wings extend to the width of eight inches and three-quarters; they are crossed by two yellowish brown bands, formed by the tips of the lesser coverts; greater and lesser wing coverts, a mixture of dark and light brown, the centre of each feather being the darkest, which in the former makes a conspicuous bar; primaries, dusky brown, margined with pale yellowish brown; the three first quill feathers are nearly equal in length, the second rather the longest, the fourth a little shorter than the third; secondaries, dusky brown, edged with pale yellowish brown; tertiaries, dusky brown, with broad edges of pale yellowish brown. Tail, dusky brown, with yellowish brown edges to the feathers; the middle ones are nearly half-an-inch shorter than the side ones; upper tail coverts, a mixture of dark and light brown, the centre of each feather being the darkest; under tail coverts, whitish, tinged with red in the summer; legs, toes, and claws, blackish brown.

Female; length, four inches and three-quarters; the head has less red on the crown, and the black of the forehead is brownish; throat, brownish black. The breast has generally no red on it; the back has seldom any red on the lower part.

In the young, after the first moult, which takes place in November, the upper bill is greyish brown, the lower one dull yellow, with the tip dusky; the feathers about the base of the bill are dull blackish brown. Head on the sides, streaked with dusky and light

yellowish brown: the red is partially assumed the following spring, but more so with age. Crown, dark brown, the feathers edged with yellowish red; neck in front and on the sides, streaked with dusky and light yellowish brown; throat, brown, the base of the feathers being black, and all the remainder light coloured; breast on the middle part and downwards, brownish white: in the following spring it acquires some red, but not so much as it afterwards attains. Back, streaked with dusky brown and dull light yellowish red.

The wings are crossed with two broad bands of the latter colour on the coverts; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dusky, the feathers edged with yellowish brown. Tail, dusky, the feathers edged with yellowish brown; under tail coverts, brownish white; claws, dusky.

The plate is from a design by the Rev. R. P. Alington.

## MEALY REDPOLE.

## STONY REDPOLE.

## LESSER REDPOLE. LESSER REDPOLE LINNET.

<i>Linaria canescens,</i>	GOULD.
<i>Linaria borealis,</i>	SELBY.
<i>Linaria minor,</i>	SELBY.
<i>Fringilla borealis,</i>	TEMMINCK.

*Linaria*—*Linum*—Flax.    *Canescens*—Inclining to hoary colour.

THERE have been doubts entertained as to the specific distinction of the present bird, but its individuality would seem to be established, and I “tell the tale as it was told to me.”

It appears to occur both on the continents of Europe and America, as also in Asia; in Japan according to M. Temminck. It is an inhabitant of Greenland.

In England it is in general only rarely met with, but great numbers are said to have been taken in the neighbourhood of London about the year 1827, and also in 1829. In Yorkshire one was obtained near Sheffield, in the year 1839: in 1847 many were procured near Ipswich, Suffolk; most of them being males. Mr. Henry Doubleday, of Epping, has met with them at Colchester, and Mr. Pelerin at Oundle. W. P. Cocks, Esq. mentions one specimen met with in Cornwall, at Penance. One was also obtained near Saffron Walden, in May, 1836; others have also been met with in other parts.



MEAY REDIOLE.

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In Scotland, two specimens have been procured; one in the neighbourhood of Bathgate, in the winter, and the other near Edinburgh.

The occurrence of this species is most frequent in winter, and it seems to be a migrant, perhaps only an occasional one, hither, the arctic and more northern regions being its native home.

Its food is said to consist of the seeds of various forest trees.

The egg is described by Meyer as being pale greenish blue, sprinkled over with pale but distinct spots of a reddish brown colour, some of them inclining to lilac, chiefly confined to a zone around the larger end.

Male; length, five inches and a quarter or a third; bill, dull yellow, the upper part brown above; between the bill and the eye is a black space, dull in the winter; iris, dusky brown; the bristly feathers at the base of the bill are yellowish grey. Forehead and crown, red, duller in the autumn, and in winter the forehead is white or reddish, marked with a black band, and the crown dusky, the feathers tipped with yellowish grey, and some of them with red; the back of the head is pale reddish white, streaked with black in the centre of each feather; the sides, in the autumn, are slightly tinted with red, and greyish or brownish white in the winter, streaked with a darker brown. Neck, in front, red, in winter greyish white; on the back it and the nape are pale reddish white, tinged with brown and streaked with black in the centre of each feather; chin, almost black; throat, black, in the winter brownish black; breast, pale brownish or greyish white, streaked, excepting on the middle, with darker brown; it is pale red in spring and summer; above red, below and on the sides whitish, streaked and tinged with brown. Back,

light yellowish brown, streaked with blackish, the feathers edged with whitish or dull reddish in winter; on the lower part it is red, but in the autumn greyish white, faintly tinged with red and streaked with brown.

The wings have the three first feathers almost equal, but the second the longest; greater wing coverts, dark brown, with broad ends of dull white, forming a conspicuous bar; lesser wing coverts, tipped with dull white, forming another short bar; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, brown, broadly margined with whitish grey, the latter more broadly than the former. The tail, long, dark greyish brown, the feathers broadly margined with white, the two centre ones are much shorter than the rest, making the tail deeply forked; upper tail coverts, greyish white with a few dark streaks, after the autumn slightly tinted with red; under tail coverts, pale greyish white, with a few dark brown streaks; legs and toes, dusky; claws, brownish black.

Female; the black before the eye is dull in winter; forehead, whitish or reddish, in winter marked with a black band; crown, red in winter; breast, white, streaked with brown, most so on the sides; back on the lower part white streaked with brown; the edges of all the feathers dull white or pale reddish.







## TWITE.

## MOUNTAIN LINNET.

*Linaria montana*,  
*Fringilla flavirostris*,

SELBY.  
 LINNÆUS.

*Linaria*—*Linum*—Flax.    *Montana*—Of, or belonging to  
 mountains.

THIS bird is found in Europe in Russia, but least extensively in an easterly direction, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and as far south as Switzerland, France, Germany, and Italy. In Asia also, in Japan, according to M. Temminck.

The Twite is plentiful in the northern parts of England, and in Scotland, Ireland, the Hebrides, and Orkney, throughout the year.

In Yorkshire it breeds in abundance on all the high moors near Halifax, also on Thorne Moor; and near Doncaster, Leeds, and York is likewise met with. The Rev. R. P. Alington has procured specimens from the neighbourhood of the sea, in Lincolnshire.

Indigenous in the north, they are only winter migrants towards the south.

Towards the commencement of winter they unite into flocks, sometimes of large extent, and frequently, in illustration of the adage that "birds of a feather flock together," in company with those of kindred species or habits, with whom they visit the farm-yards. They are

not of a shy nature, but if disturbed, betake themselves to any tall trees that may be near, or to some distant field. When spring arrives, they leave their winter haunts, and disperse over the hilly tracts for their summer sojourn.

Their flight is rapid and undulated, and they wheel about over the field on which they are going to settle, previously to doing so, uttering a soft twitter at intervals.

Their food consists of the seeds of various wild plants and grasses—the turnip, the thistle, chickweed, wild mustard, groundsel, flax, knapweed, and others.

The note is pleasing, and its usual chirp is considered to resemble the name which it has thence derived.

The nest is built on the ground, chiefly in heath, or among gorse, and but seldom, if ever, in bushes. It is formed of small roots, heather, moss, and dry grass, and is lined with a small quantity of hair or wool, and a few feathers.

The eggs, four, five, six, or seven in number, are of a pale greenish or bluish white, spotted with reddish brown or light brown and purple red towards the larger end, with sometimes a few blackish dots.

Male; length, five inches and a quarter; bill, yellow, in summer yellowish white, sometimes greyish yellow; iris, hazel; head on the sides, light reddish brown; forehead, crown, neck on the back, and nape, brown of two shades, the middle part of the feather being darker than the rest. Chin and throat, light reddish yellow brown; breast, light reddish yellow brown, streaked on the sides with dark brown; below dull brownish white; back, brown, the middle part of the feathers being darker than the rest, which enlarges in summer, making the back darker; the lower part is crimson or purple red in summer.

The wings, which expand to the width of rather over eight inches and three-quarters, have the first and third feathers equal in length, the second the longest in the wing, the fourth a little shorter than the third; greater wing coverts, tipped with pale brown, forming a bar across the wing; lesser wing coverts, partially tipped with pale brown, forming a second bar; primaries, brownish black, the four first edged with white, with narrow edges of pale brown; tertiaries, brownish black, with broader edges of pale brown. The tail, which is long and much forked, is brownish black, with narrow yellowish brown external edges, and white at the base, and broader light brown or greyish white inner margins; upper tail coverts, brown, the middle of the feathers darker than the edges; under tail coverts, dull brownish white, some of them with a dark central mark; legs, toes, and claws, very dark brown.

The female in winter resembles the male, but is paler in colour, and without the red on the lower part of the back. Length, not quite five inches and a quarter; The bill is less clear yellow at the base, and dusky brown at the tip. The wings expand to the width of eight inches and three-quarters.

The young are lighter-coloured at first; bill, pale greyish brown. The white on the wings is less extended; legs and toes, light brown; claws, dusky.

## BULLFINCH.

NOPE. POPE. ALP. HOOP. COMMON BULLFINCH.

*Loxia pyrrhula*,

PENNANT. MONTAGU.

*Pyrrhula vulgaris*,

FLEMING. SELBY.

*Loxia*—*Loxos*—Oblique—transverse, (from the shape of the bill in some species.) *Pyrrhula*—*Pyrrhulas*—Some bird with red plumage. *Pyrrhos*—Red.

THIS is a strikingly handsome species—an ornament of the country. In Europe, it inhabits Russia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Germany; in Asia also it occurs, being found in Tartary, and in Japan, according to Thunberg and Temminck.

It is met with throughout England, Ireland, and Scotland; in Orkney one was shot at Lopness, by Mr. Strang, in 1809.

In the spring time it is to be seen more frequently in gardens and orchards, and may be nearly approached in its search there for food. In the winter it meets you in the lane, or by the hedge-row in the field.

A true "Bird of the green wood," the Bullfinch avoids the more sterile, or the more highly cultivated districts; for here, as in so many other instances, "extremes meet," and the absence of timber, in our country at least, alike betokens the highest and the lowest degree of cultivation. It frequents, therefore, those where trees abound, being to be seen in the



BULLFINCH.

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

depth of the large wood, along the side of the shady grove, in the rich orchard, the budding plantation, the trim garden, the leafy hedge, and the secluded dell through which some little streamlet winds, the gentle trickling of which you listen to with complacent pleasure, while you saunter along the bank in the noon of a summer day. Everywhere his rich red colour forms a conspicuous object, so that, like the den of the "Dragon of Wantley," "you could not choose but spy it."

These birds are easily kept in confinement, and have been known to pair with the Canary. They are very fond of washing themselves.

The flight of the Bullfinch is quick and undulated, and capable of being protracted on occasion. It does not fly far when disturbed by your approach, but quickly re-enters the hedge, or the side of the wood, along which it flitted before you.

Its food consists of the seeds and leaves of groundsel, chickweed, and other weeds, hips and haws, berries and fruits, such as the cherry and plum, the buds, especially the blossom buds, of various trees, such as the plum, the apple, the medlar, the cherry, the gooseberry, and others; and if I may venture upon a conjecture, its name is derived from this circumstance, Bullfinch, if so, being a corruption of Budfinch, the word bud being pronounced in the vulgate of the north of England, as if spelled 'bood.' Small stones are also swallowed to aid digestion.

The common note is a short, plaintive, and sweet pipe, which at once arrests the attention: it is accompanied by a flirtation of the tail: probably its vernacular names Nope, Hoop, and Pope, are derived from its resemblance to those sounds. In spring the song is a low and desultory



warble, and the male bird frequently serenades his mate for hours together, while she is sitting on the nest, puffing out his feathers, and moving his head awry. The Bullfinch is taught to whistle tunes, and, I believe, to articulate words.

Towards the end of April, the birds pair, and nidification is commenced in the beginning of May, and is finished by the end of that month, or the beginning of June.

The nest is formed of small twigs, and is lined with small roots, the whole being not firmly compacted: in some instances moss is added. It is generally placed either in a tree, such as a fir, or in the middle of a bush, frequently a hawthorn, at a height of four or five feet from the ground. It is often built in a shrubbery, even near a house, and occasionally, though but seldom, in a garden.

The eggs, four or five in number, are pale blue, speckled and streaked with purple grey, and dark purple. They are hatched towards the end of May, after an incubation of fifteen days. The male takes his turn in sitting with the female. The latter sits very closely, though she is in general easily frightened away. The male is less so, but it is said that if he be disturbed, the nest is almost always deserted, which is not the case when the female is alarmed. William Henry Rudston Read, Esq., of Hayton and York, has recorded in the "Naturalist," old series, that, when resident at Frickley Hall, near Doncaster, a hen bird which built in a laurel near the house, suffered herself to be touched while sitting on her young ones, and would feed from the hand without the least fear. The birds are supposed to pair for life: the members of the family keep together until the spring.

Male; length, from six inches to six and a half—these birds varying considerably in size; bill, very short, thick, and shining black; iris, dark brown; a few bristly feathers surround the base of the bill; head and crown, deep glossy blue black; neck on the back and nape, elegant bluish grey; chin, black; throat and breast, a lovely red; back, delicate bluish grey, on the lower part pure white. The wings ordinarily expand to the width of nine inches, and a little over three-quarters, but sometimes more than that: the third quill is the longest, the second scarcely shorter, the fourth longer than the first, which is about the same length as the fifth: underneath, the wings are bluish grey; greater wing coverts, black, their ends white, forming a conspicuous bar across the wing; lesser wing coverts, delicate bluish grey; primaries, brownish black; secondaries, brownish black, the outer webs glossed with blue; some of them are occasionally found tinged with red; tertiaries, brownish black, tinged also with blue. The tail, glossy blue black, is of twelve feathers; underneath, it is greyish black; upper tail coverts, glossy blue black; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, purple brown; claws, brown.

Female; length, five inches and a little over three-quarters; iris, brown; head, not quite so deep a black as in the male; on the sides it is dull light chocolate brown; chin, throat, and breast, dull light chocolate brown, with more or less of a tinge of purple or red; the back has the grey tinged with brown, and the white on its lower part is less extensive. Under tail coverts, less clear white than in the male; legs and toes, dusky brown; claws, black.

The young, when fledged, have the upper parts greyish brown, without any black on the head, and the

lower parts yellowish brown: after the first moult, namely, in about two months, their distinctive garb is assumed, but it is not till the second, or even the third year that the fullness of the bright tints is gained. The red is much deeper in some individuals than in others.

A specimen has been known entirely white, and others have been met with pied black and white. Caged birds not unfrequently turn black, of a duller or deeper tint—the result of their having been fed on hemp-seed. One is figured by Professor Nillson, which is pure white on the back, wings, and tail; but the head and all the lower parts of a delicate rose-colour.





PINE GROSSBEAK.

## PINE GROSSBEAK.

PINE BULLFINCH. COMMON HAWFINCH.

<i>Loxia enucleator</i> ,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
<i>Corythus enucleator</i> ,	FLEMING.
<i>Pyrrhula enucleator</i> ,	SELBY. JENYNS.

*Loxia. Loxos*—Curved—oblique.      *Enucleator*—One that  
takes out the kernel of a thing.

So long ago, at the least, as the time of Horace, it would seem to have been considered as a barbarism to compound words of two different languages; 'Canusini more bilinguis;' and whereas the name of Grosbeak, heretofore applied to the bird before us, has been an instance of the fault in question, it will be seen that I have changed it for one which has the merit of being English in both its component parts alike.

The Pine Grossbeak is a native of the northern regions of Europe and America, but is found in the former, not only in Siberia, Russia, Norway, Sweden, and Lapland, but also, though rarely, in France, Germany, and Italy.

In this country a few have occasionally been met with. A flight were seen on the Denes, near Yarmouth, Norfolk, in November, 1822; and in recording the circumstance in the "Account of the Birds found in Norfolk," by John Henry Gurney, Esq., and William Richard Fisher, Esq., it is added, that two instances are

on the back, dull yellow at first, afterwards orange yellow, the feathers streaked with dusky, Chin, throat and breast, ash-coloured grey tinged with brown; back brownish slate-coloured above, below dull yellow, afterwards orange yellow. Greater and lesser wing covert primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, greyish black tipped with greyish white. Tail, greyish black; upper tail coverts, dull yellow, afterwards orange yellow under tail coverts, ash-coloured grey. Legs and toe blackish brown; claws, black.

Young birds of the first year, before their first moult resemble the female, but are more or less tinged with brown.







CROSSBILL.

## CROSSBILL.

COMMON CROSSBILL. EUROPEAN CROSSBILL. SHEL-APPLE.

*Loxia curvirostra*,

LINNÆUS. LATHAM.

*Loxia. Loxos*—Curved—oblique. *Curvirostra. Curvus*—  
Curved. *Rostra*—The beaks of birds.

It has been abundantly and conclusively demonstrated that the curious beak of the Crossbill, so far from being, as described by Buffon, "an error and defect in nature, and a useless deformity," is most peculiarly and admirably adapted to the mode of life for which it was created.

On the European continent these singular birds are met with in Russia, Siberia, Denmark, Norway, Lapland, Sweden, Bavaria, Poland, Germany, Silesia, Bohemia, Prussia, Holland, France, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain. In Asia also, even to remote Japan, and in North America in various parts.

In every or almost every county of England they have at one time or other been met with. In Cornwall, however, they are very rare. One was shot in the Orchard, Grove Hill, Woodlane; and three at Carclew, in April, 1850.

In the latter end of the year 1821 and the beginning of 1822, Crossbills were very numerous in many parts of the country; so they were also in 1828, 1829, 1833, 1834, 1837, 1838, 1839, as likewise in 1806, 1791, and

1593, of which the following account is given in an old manuscript, quoted by Mr. Yarrell:—"That the yeere 1593 was a greate and exceeding yeere of apples; and there were greate plenty of strang birds, that shewed themselves at the time the apples were full rype, who fedde uppon the kernells onely of those apples, and haveinge a bill with one beake wrythinge over the other, which would presently bore a greate hole in the apple, and make way to the kernells; they were of the bignesse of a Bullfinch, the henne right like the henne of the Bullfinch in coulour; the cocke a very glorious bird, in a manner al redde or yellowe on the brest, backe, and head. The oldest man living never heard or reade of any such like bird; and the thinge most to bee noted was, that it seemed they came out of some country not inhabited; for that they at the first would abide shooting at them, either with pellet, bowe, or other engine, and not remove till they were stricken downe; moreover, they would abide the throweing at them, in so much as diverse were stricken downe and killed with often throweing at them with apples. They came when the apples were rype, and went away when the apples were cleane fallen. They were very good meate."

So also in Childrey's "Britannia Baconica:"—"In Queen Elizabeth's time a flock of birds came into Cornwall, about harvest, a little bigger than a Sparrow, which had bills thwarted crosswise at the end, and with these they would cut an apple in two at one snap, eating onely the kernels; and they made a great spoil among the apples."

In Ireland they have been often noticed.

In Scotland they were abundant in 1821, and since then have been repeatedly observed: some remain

in that part of the island throughout the year.

In Orkney great numbers of this bird were observed during winter a few years ago. They were also very abundant in several of the islands in 1806 and 1807.

In Yorkshire, in the neighbourhood of Doncaster, in the year 1836, they were very plentiful in the plantations near Sandal, and no doubt all around. I wrote an account of them in the "Magazine of Natural History," volume ix., p. 413; also near Knaresborough in 1846, as likewise in numbers about the year 1838, so also in 1829. They have been met with near Hebden-Bridge, Halifax, Barnsley, Sheffield, Killingbeck, Leeds, and Boynton, near Bridlington.

In Bramham Park several nests were found in the year 1840, and at Boynton, Arthur Strickland, Esq. found one himself; also near Swinhope, in Lincolnshire, the Rev. R. P. Alington has known them in former years tolerably common, feeding on the cones of the larch firs.

This species also builds in the fir plantations about Dodington, Kent, of which Mr. Chaffey of that place is my informant; and it has also been known to do so near Dartford, in the same county, and near Saffron Walden, Essex, in a garden in the town, and in Orwell Park, near Ipswich, in the year 1822. Instances of its doing so are also recorded in the Messieurs Sheppard and Whitcar's "Catalogue of the Norfolk and Suffolk Birds;" likewise in Durham by Mr. Joseph Duff; and in Devonshire a pair built at Ogwell House, near Newton, the seat of Thomas William Taylor, Esq., in April, 1839, as recorded by W. R. Hall Jordan, Esq., of Teignmouth; and another pair in Holt Forest, Hampshire; also at Broome, the seat of Sir H. Oxenden, Bart., in Kent.

They have been observed with us in some parts of

the kingdom in every month of the year, but mostly in those of the winter and spring. They appear in all places to be of a roving wandering disposition, uncertain in their movements, appearing suddenly here and there in large numbers, and as suddenly disappearing again; but doubtless they are guided by some instinct, the cause or the object of which is unknown to us.

These birds are by no means shy, and are very easily tamed: in one instance, namely in the aviary of Lord Braybrooke, at Audley End, near Saffron Walden, Essex, they have been known to build and lay. In confinement they shew their connexion with the Parrots by climbing about their cage in all directions, both with beak and claws; even when dead they still cling on, with the tenacity of life, to the bough which has afforded them a resting-place—"the ruling passion strong in death." They are reckoned very good eating on the continent, and are sold for the purpose in considerable numbers.

Their flight is undulated, and at the same time quick and rapid.

Their food consists of the seeds of the various species of fir trees, as also at times those of the apple, the mountain ash, the alder, the hawthorn, and others, if need be even those of the thistle: sand and small fragments of stone are also swallowed. In extracting the seeds from the smaller cones of the larch, and others of the pines, they frequently, having first cut one off from the tree with their bill, hold it firmly against a branch between the claws of one or both feet, after having flitted with it to some neighbouring bough, or removed to the nearest convenient part of the one they are on. The sound of the cracking of the cones arrests attention. On the larger ones they perch, and make them at once

their dining-table and their dinner—'mensas consumimus:' sometimes the cone falls to the ground—an unfortunate turning of the tables for the poor bird. They occasionally descend to drink.

In spring, the note, though low, is pleasing and agreeable; at other times while feeding, they keep up a constant chatter—a 'chip, chip,' and 'soc, soc,' accompanied by a movement of the body, and in flying from one place to another emit a sharp tone. On warm sunny days, they sometimes indulge in a sudden flight, and after disporting themselves about for a short time in full chorus, alight on the tops of the trees, continuing for a time a gentle warbling; both the male and female sing.

Nidification commences very early in foreign countries, even in January or February, the young having been found fledged in March.

The nest is placed in the angle of the junction of the branches to the tree, low down and also high up; and is loosely compacted of small twigs, grass, small straws, and moss, lined on the inside with the dry leaves of the fir tree, and also with feathers.

The eggs are white, sometimes tinged with blue or green, and spotted, chiefly at the thicker end, with reddish, bluish red, purple or brown.

These birds vary very greatly in size, as they also do in colour, exhibiting a diversity of shades according to age or season, of yellow, orange, red, scarlet, green, and olive. Male; length, from six inches and a quarter to seven and a half; the bill, which varies considerably in length, curvature, and the degree of elongation of the lower mandible, is above principally dark greyish brown, as is the tip of the lower bill, the remainder being dull yellowish; the upper part sometimes inclines to the

right, and sometimes to the left, and the bill has a lateral expansion, as well as the ordinary one. Iris, hazel; head and crown, pale dull red; neck behind and nape, pale red mixed with grey; breast above, pale dull red with a mixture of yellow, below greyish white, darker on the sides. Back, on the middle part dusky red, the lower part bright reddish yellow.

The wings expand to the width of a little over eleven inches and a third to eleven and three-quarters; the second quill is the longest, the first a trifle shorter, as is the third than it; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, deep brown, the smaller feathers tinged with dull red; greater and lesser under wing coverts, brownish grey. The tail is rather short, extending one inch beyond the closed wings; upper tail coverts, dark brown; under tail coverts, greyish brown, broadly margined with dull white. Legs and toes, purple brown; claws, brownish black.

The moult takes place in the autumn, and in the height of summer all the tints are paler, and the plumage worn on the back, only shews darker from this cause.

Female; length, seven inches and a sixth to seven and a quarter; head, crown, neck on the back, nape, and back, dull greyish brown, the centre of the feathers only slightly darker; on the lower part the back is dull yellowish grey. The wings expand to the width of eleven inches and three-quarters, or thereabouts.

The young are at first dark green, with blackish longitudinal markings, and the bill is not crossed. The young males after the first moult are variously dull red, yellowish red, greenish yellow, or dull yellow, shaded with reddish. The back on its lower part is yellowish; wings, blackish brown; tail, blackish brown.







PARROT CROSSBILL.

## PARROT CROSSBILL.

*Loxia pityopsittacus*, BEWICK. FLEMING.  
*Loxia curvirostra major*, (as a variety,) GMELIN. LATHAM.

*Loxia. Loxos*—Curved—oblique. *Pityopsittacus. Pitüs*—  
 A pine tree. *Psittacus*—A Parrot.

THIS species, as by many eminent naturalists it is considered, is an inhabitant of the high northern latitudes of Europe. It is found in Germany also, and is occasionally met with in Holland, Switzerland, and France, as well as in Sweden and Norway.

In this country they are but rare visitants, and only appear now and then, 'longo post intervallo.' A pair were received by Pennant from Shropshire; one was shot in Surrey; and another was obtained in Epping Forest, Essex, in the autumn of 1835. One was shot at Saxham, in Suffolk, in November, 1850; and one some years previously at Riddlesworth Hall, Norfolk, as recorded by Alfred Newton, Esq., of Elveden Hall, Thetford, in the "Zoologist," page 3145. Several were sold in the London market in March, 1838; and one was shot at Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex, on the 21st. of January, 1850. Mr. Chaffey, of Dodington, Kent, informs me that he saw a small flock of these birds in a larch plantation there in September, 1851.

In Scotland two have occurred.

In Ireland, one was shot by Rainey Maxwell, Esq., at Greenvile, near Belfast, in May, 1802.

These birds are denizens of the large pine forests, and are said to prefer the tops of the trees, seldom descending except to drink, and roosting together at night in large companies. They are capable of being kept in confinement.

Their food consists of the seeds of fir cones and others.

They breed in April or May, or even earlier, the eggs having been found in February and March; and nests having been observed to have been begun by the middle of December.

The nest is placed chiefly in lofty forest trees, and is composed of small twigs, lined with dry grass or leaves of the fir tree.

The eggs are said to be four or five in number, ash-coloured, or bluish white, and spotted with bluish red and dusky at the larger end.

The young are hatched after a fortnight's incubation.

Male; length, seven inches and a quarter to seven and a half or rather more; bill, large, dusky grey, yellowish at the base of the lower mandible; iris, bright hazel; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, red; chin, throat, and breast, red; back, darker red, lighter on the lower part: all the red feathers are more or less streaked with dusky in younger birds. The wings extend to the width of one foot; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dusky black, darker with age; the first quill feather is the longest, the second nearly as long, the third a little shorter still, and the fourth a quarter of an inch shorter than the third. The tail, forked, dusky black, darker with age; it extends one inch beyond the end of the wings; upper tail coverts, light red; legs, short and strong, and reddish brown, as are the toes; claws, dark brown. The moult takes place in September, October, and November.

Female; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, greenish ash-colour, with patches of brown; chin and throat, grey, clouded with yellowish brown; breast, ash-colour, varied with yellowish green; back, dull greenish yellow, lighter and more yellow on its lower part; under tail coverts, greyish white, the base of each feather greyish brown.

The young bird of the year has the bill blackish horn-colour; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, greyish white, much streaked with greyish brown; back, greyish white, much streaked with greyish brown, on the lower part slightly tinged with yellow; greater and lesser wing coverts, dark brown tipped with pale brown; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, blackish brown, also tipped with pale brown; legs and toes, lead-colour; claws, black.

## AMERICAN WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL.

*Loxia leucoptera*,  
*Loxia falcirostra*,

GMELIN. BUONAPARTE.  
 PENNANT. FLEMING?

*Loxia*. *Loxos*—Curved—oblique. *Leucoptera*. *Leucos*—White.  
*Pteron*—A wing.

THIS and the following species were first distinguished by M. De Selys Longchamps.

The one before us is a native of the whole of the northern parts of North America, where it inhabits the extensive pine forests. It is found also in northern Europe, a few being occasionally seen in Sweden, and also in Germany; and occurred in Silesia and Thuringia in considerable numbers in the autumn of 1826.

A White-winged Crossbill, a female bird, was shot near Northampton in the winter of the year 1848. It was kept alive for four months. Of this Mr. William Felkin, Jun., of Carrington, near Nottingham, has obligingly informed me. One in Mr. Yarrell's collection was picked up dead on the sea-shore at Exmouth, on the 17th. of September, 1845, by E. B. Fitton, Esq.; and another, in that of Hugh Edwin Strickland, Esq., was shot near Worcester, in 1836, being in company at the time with the Common Crossbill; another was shot by Mr. Scaman, near Ipswich, Suffolk. One, a female, in the garden of Robert J. Bell, Esq., of Mickleover House, Derby; it was in company with a flock of Fieldfares; one, out of a flock of four or five, on some fir trees



AMERICAN WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL.



near Thetford, Norfolk, on the 10th. of May, 1846; several near Walton House, Carlisle, Cumberland, in the same year; and nine others, five males and four females, by Mr. Thomas Bond, of Swinstead House, near Brampton, also in that county. One was shot out of a small flock which were feeding on fir cones, at Drinkstone, in Suffolk; and one at Larigan, near Penzance, Cornwall.

In Scotland one, mentioned by Pennant, and one recorded by Archibald Jerdon, Esq., which was shot near Bonjedward, Roxburghshire, in February, 1841.

These birds go in flocks of from twenty to fifty, taking wing all at once together when alarmed, and after a little manœuvring in the air, generally alighting again on the trees from which they had moved. The young leave the nest in June, and are soon able to join the parent birds in their autumnal migration from the "North countree" to some rather more hospitable clime.

The nest is said to be placed on the branches of pine trees, and to be composed of grasses, cemented together with earth, and lined with feathers.

The eggs are described as white, marked with yellowish spots.

Male; length, about six inches. The bill is much compressed laterally, and black in colour; a black line passes through the eye. The head, which is sometimes speckled on the sides with black, and is crossed on the forehead with a line of that colour, is fine crimson, as are also the crown and neck, the base of each feather being dark grey. The nape is crossed by a blackish band; chin, throat, and breast above, fine crimson, the latter on the middle part and below is greyish brown. The back, also crimson, is crossed about the middle by a blackish band.



The wings have the first three quill feathers nearly equal in length, the fourth shorter than the third, but much longer than the fifth; greater and lesser wing coverts, broadly tipped with white, forming two bands; primaries, black, some of them narrowly edged with white; secondaries and tertiaries, black, some of the latter tipped with white. Tail, almost uniform black; upper tail coverts, dusky, bordered at the tip of each feather with a narrow line of white. Legs and toes, brown.

The female, at first like the young male, has the head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, greenish grey, the feathers bordered with yellowish green. Chin, throat, and breast above, greenish grey, streaked with blackish lines, and on the middle whitish, with some yellow; back, greenish grey, on the lower part pale yellow. The wings are barred with white as in the male.

In the young, the bill is dark horn-colour towards the point, the upper mandible very much compressed, the lower one is rather lighter in colour; iris, dark hazel; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, dull greenish grey, mottled with a darker tint on the centre of each feather. Chin, throat, and breast, lighter grey, the feathers streaked with dusky brown. Back, on the lower part tinged with greenish yellow. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dull black, tipped with white, forming two conspicuous bars across the wings; primaries and secondaries, dusky black, with narrow lighter-coloured edges; tertiaries, dusky black, edged and tipped with white. The tail, forked, the feathers dull black, with narrow light-coloured edges; under tail coverts, dark at the base of the feathers with greyish white ends, Legs, toes, and claws, dark brown.

The Prince of Musignano has described one in which the crimson colour was changed for light buff orange.





THE BIRD OF THE YEAR

## TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL.

<i>Loxia tænioptera</i> ,	GLOGER.
<i>Loxia bifasciata</i> ,	NILLSON.
<i>Crucirostra bifasciata</i> ,	BREHM.
<i>Loxia leucoptera</i> ,	JENTENS. GOULD. YARRELL.

*Loxia*—*Loxos*—Oblique—curved. *Tænioptera*—*Tainia*—A band.  
*Pteron*—A wing.

To Mrs. H. E. Strickland, I am indebted for the coloured drawing from which the plate is taken; a "Happy Illustration" of what might be expected from the daughter of so eminent a naturalist as Sir William Jardine, and the wife of such another as my friend Hugh Edwin Strickland, Esq.

The original plate is in Buonaparte's monograph of the Crossbills.

I describe this species as a British bird, as well as the one preceding it, because so many specimens of White-winged Crossbills have of late years occurred in the country, that it seems hardly possible to doubt but that some of them must belong to the one before us, an European species; two individuals of the number only, as far as I am aware, having been positively identified with the other, which is an American one; Buonaparte and Schlegel also indeed, though I know not on what authority, give Britain as one of the countries to which it occasionally migrates.

One was shot at Grenville, near Belfast, in Ireland, January 11th., 1802.

Many examples of this species have occurred on the continent of Europe; its proper habitat being the cold districts of Siberia and northern Asia, from whence it wanders occasionally into the more temperate regions of Russia, Sweden, Germany, Holland, and Belgium. In this our continent, therefore, it is necessarily only considered as an occasional straggler; and from whence it has come, whether from the American continent, across the wide and stormy Atlantic by some instinctively discovered "North-west Passage," or from the equally wild regions of the Caucasian range by some overland transit, is a question which we cannot answer, and must accordingly be content to leave in the uncertain state in which it propounds itself to our inquiry. Certainly, however, it would appear the most natural, that that journey, the land one, which offers a halting-place, when required, to the weary traveller, should be the one adopted by the fragile bird. Uncertain too, as are the periods, so are also doubtless the causes of its migrations, if migrations they may be called, wanderings rather, instigated by some motive, which, if we knew, might commend itself at once to our reason as the natural one, or by some mysterious and hidden impulse, whose capricious and wayward tendency we could by no means fathom the secret of, even if we had ascertained that it was by it that its movements were directed.

Male; length, from six inches and a quarter to a little over seven; the bill is wider at the base than that of the American White-winged Crossbill; iris, hazel; head and crown, pale dull red; neck behind and nape, pale red mixed with grey; chin, throat, and breast above, pale dull red with a mixture of yellow; below

greyish white, darker on the sides; the back is dusky red on the middle part, and bright reddish yellow on the lower; the sides do not assume the black tint which distinguishes the American White-winged Crossbill.

The wings are shorter than in the Common Crossbill; the greater and lesser wing coverts have two broad white bands across them, occupying the tips of those feathers; primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, deep brown, the smaller feathers tinged with dull red; the tertiaries are also tipped with white; greater and lesser under wing coverts, brownish grey. The tail is longer than in the Common Crossbill; legs and toes, purple brown; the toes are also shorter than in the Common Crossbill.

## ROSE-COLOURED PASTOR.

ROSE OUZEL. ROSE-COLOURED OUZEL. ROSE-COLOURED  
STARLING.

*Pastor roseus*,  
*Turdus roseus*,

FLEMING. SELBY.  
PENNANT. MONTAGU.

*Pastor*—A shepherd.

*Roseus*—Rose-coloured.

THIS is a "first cousin, once removed," of the Starling, with whom accordingly it keeps up, as will be seen, the intercommunication of relationship, but its position in the society of birds is somewhat anomalous.

In Europe it occurs occasionally in Russia, Siberia, Dalmatia, Lapland, Sweden, and Suabia, and regularly visits Spain, Italy, Hungary, and the south of France. It is a native of Asia, and in India seems to be very abundant in the Dukkun, forty or fifty being sometimes killed at a shot out of the vast flocks which almost darken the air. In Africa it is also met with, in Egypt.

In Yorkshire, two were shot near Bawtry; one at Skiningrove, near Whitby; one at Thorne, out of a flock of three or four; one at Ripley; one at Farnley Hall, near Otley; one near Beverley; one at North Burton; one at Boynton Hall, near Bridlington, in 1829; and one in Cootham Marsh, near Redcar, on the 28th. of August, 1851.



FRIGATEBIRD





The following have also been obtained at various times:—One at Norwood, Surrey, near London; and one at Iver Court, Buckinghamshire. In Caermarthen-shire, one shot while eating cherries in a nursery garden at Swansea, in July, 1836. In Cambridgeshire, one at Haydon House, near Royston. In Suffolk, one at Woodbridge, in July, 1832, one at Lound, near Lowestoft, in June, 1851, and another on the 7th. of September, 1850; one in August, 1815, one by Captain Manby, near the Hospital, in April, 1820, and one in April, 1833. In Norfolk, one at Brooke Hall, and one at Thetford, in September, 1843, and some others. In Northumberland, a small flock was seen near Bamborough Castle, in July, 1818, in company with Starlings; one about the same time near Newcastle; and two others were shot near Alnwick. In Lincolnshire also, and in Durham. In Glamorganshire, one in a garden near Swansea, in 1836. In Lancashire, two in the neighbourhood of Ormskirk. In Anglesea, one at Holyhead. In Hampshire, a pair were seen near Christchurch, and the male was procured. In Derbyshire, one about the year 1809, near Weston, and another was observed near Melbourne, in October, 1842, in company with Starlings, but, being close to some sheep, it could not be fired at. In Sussex this bird has also been procured.

One was shot near Lostwithiel, in Cornwall, by Philip Pomeroy, Esq., about the year 1822, and another by Boughton Kingdon, Esq., my informant, about the year 1835, in the autumn: it was in an elder tree, and was attacked by Swallows and other small birds. Also one at Helston; and one in the Scilly Islands; and another was shot at St. Budeaux, in the neighbourhood of Plymouth, on the 17th. of

June, 1851. For a beautifully-executed drawing of this specimen, as of several other rare species, I am exceedingly indebted to a very obliging correspondent, John Gatcombe, Esq., of Wyndham Place, Plymouth. An adult male was shot at Eastwood, near Nottingham, in October, 1851, as William Felkin, Esq., Jun., of Carrington, near that place, has written me word; and one at Topsham, in Devonshire, of which N. Rowe, Esq., of Worcester College, Oxford, has informed me. One at Chudleigh, on the 18th. of June, 1851; one at Berry Head, on the 12th. of the same month; and one about the same time of the year in 1845. One was shot in Oxfordshire, another near Oxford, in the spring of 1837, and another in February, 1838.

In Scotland, one at Dunkeld, and another shot in a garden in Forfarshire, on the 29th. of September, 1831.

In Ireland several have been taken.

In the Orkney Islands one was procured, of which my friend Hugh Edwin Strickland, Esq. has informed me; and another, a female, was taken at Hoy; one also in the garden of the Rev. Mr. Hamilton; one caught at Skaill, and kept for some time in confinement; another shot by Mr. Urquhart, at Elsness; and others also have been observed at Hoy. One has occurred in Shetland.

These birds are capable of being tamed. In their wild state they are said to consort with the Starlings.

Their food consists principally of insects, and in search of some of these they frequently perch on the backs of sheep, in the same way that the Starlings do, and hence, it would appear, their generic name. They are considered in the countries where they are numerous to be beneficial on this account, and are therefore

protected by the inhabitants, more wise than some of ours in similar cases. They are also partial to fruit, and are often accordingly found in gardens; they likewise eat seeds.

Their common note is a harsh one, but they have considerable vocal powers.

The nest is located in holes of trees, and in cavities in old walls.

The eggs are five or six in number, and are said by the Hon. Thomas Littleton Powis, on the authority of Mr. Linder, of Geneva, to be white, resembling those of the Starling.

Male; length, eight inches and a half to nearly nine inches; bill, yellowish rose-colour, except at the tip, which, with part of the upper one, is almost black; iris, deep reddish brown; a crest, which comes to its full length in the third year, is formed of the elongated feathers of the head, which, as well as the crown, neck on the back, and nape, is black glossed with purple blue; chin and throat, black; breast and back, delicate rose-colour.

The wings have the first feather very short, only three-quarters of an inch long, the second the longest, the third a little shorter than the second, the fourth a quarter of an inch shorter than the third, and the others graduated; greater wing coverts, glossy black, with green reflections; lesser wing coverts, black, margined with grey; primaries, brownish black, tinged with green; some of the secondaries are glossy black with green reflections, and some of them only so on the outer webs. The tail is rather short, and slightly rounded, its colour glossy greenish black; under tail coverts, black. Legs and toes, yellowish brown; claws, darker brown.

The female resembles the male, but her colours are much duller. The breast and the back have the rose-colour obscured with brown.

Young; bill, yellow at the base, gradually encroaching on the brown at the tip; there is no crest; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, dull brown, which gradually becomes blacker; chin and throat, white; breast, greyish brown; back, dull brown, gradually darkening. Primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, dark brown, edged with white or greyish ash-colour; tail, dark brown, the feathers edged with greyish ash-colour; under tail coverts, white. Legs, toes, and claws, brown.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.















